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# MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST !

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THOMAS CLEMENT LONERGAN







— SCALE 1:80,000 —

FIRST ARMY A.E.F.

during the

Prepared in the Operations Section of the General Staff G.H.Q.

—LEGEND—

--- Line along which liaison was maintained where front was not continuous.

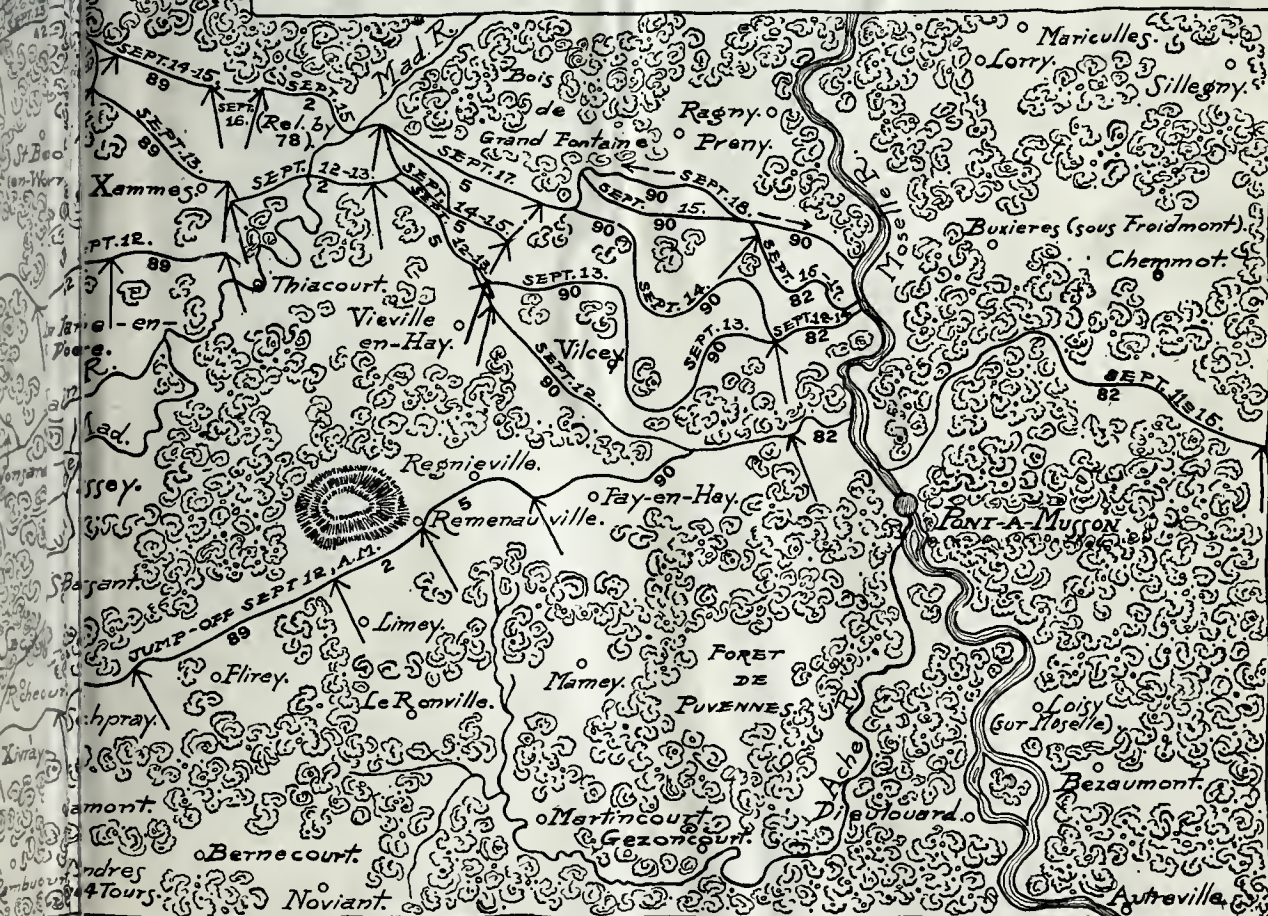
A diagram of a rectangle with a horizontal top side labeled 5. The rectangle is oriented horizontally, and the top side is the longest. The number 5 is centered above the top side.

FR = French. D.I.C. = French Colonial Division.

*D.C.P. = French Dismounted Cavalry Division.*

Advance elements of the 1st & 26th Divisions met here  
Sept 13th, about 7:30 a.m.

*Divisions in Army and Corps Reserves not shown.*



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VOLUME



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THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE A. E. F.

General John J. Pershing, U. S. Army, rides at the head of his soldiers down the Champs Élysées during the Fête de la Victoire, Paris, July 14th, 1919.



# It Might Have Been Lost!

*A Chronicle from Alien Sources of the Struggle to  
Preserve the National Identity of the A. E. F.*

By

THOMAS CLEMENT LONERGAN

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*Illustrated*

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IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST



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by

Thomas Clement Lonergan

**First Edition**



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Bar 8. 213

*I desire in this manner, even though it be  
entirely inadequate, to express the regard I hold  
for the real friends of mine who, in the very face  
of the slanderous winds that blew so fiercely  
across my path, persisted in their faith in me.*

T. C. L.

225579





# IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST!

A CHRONICLE FROM ALIEN SOURCES OF THE STRUGGLE  
TO PRESERVE THE NATIONAL IDENTITY  
OF THE A. E. F.

(IN FOUR PARTS)

PART I. THE PROPOSAL

PART II. THE STRUGGLE

PART III. THE ACHIEVEMENT

PART IV. THE APPENDICES

(COMPILED FROM OFFICIAL RECORDS)



## FOREWORD

MORE than ten years have passed since the memorable meeting, affecting the peace of the world, took place on a railroad coach in the edges of the forest of Compiègne. Various phases of the tremendous events that, for four years preceding the signing of the armistice, were consummated in the holocaust of universal war, still exist vividly in the minds of those living, who played a part, however small, in their happening. In time the original scenes will become miraged entirely with the mistiness of the past, so that in the adolescence of the next generation there is likelihood that the story of the actual details may be presented in an ill-proportioned, even distorted, manner, perhaps to such a degree as to arouse antagonistic feelings.

It seems timely, therefore, to record the account of an early phase of our own participation in the great struggle about which little is known and less has been publicly promulgated. Indeed a reliable résumé of the true facts relating to the attempt to incorporate American troops into French and British Divisions should constitute a brief satisfactory both to the United States and our Allies. Only recently, with the death of the great Allied Generalissimo, the



matter might have been fanned into controversial blaze, had not the repugnance of the venerable French war Premier to engage himself in what he characterized as an "argument before the coffin," smothered the fire. Consequently the true story of this affair, so fiercely contested during the first year after the United States entry into the World War is a heritage due to the posterity of these countries lest it be unwittingly led by exaggerated coloring of the incident into false prejudices.

The authenticity of the narrative can hardly be challenged since the structure rests entirely on the official documents transcribed from the alien files of our French and British Allies.

It is a tribute to the British national characteristic of fairness that the copies, accomplished almost entirely from their archives, should have been made possible willingly and helpfully on their part. This same fairness is equally apparent throughout the negotiations that are described in this chronicle, although invariably accompanied by that other essentially British quality,—tenacity of purpose.

The ethical value of making public these exchanges of opinion on the subject was well calculated for me by a distinguished British General with whom I once discussed this aspect. He declared himself after this fashion:

"Too long, through misrepresentation of fact or lack of co-operative understanding, have both our peoples failed in correct appreciation of each other. Bitterness has sometimes been engendered through

exaggeration of realities. The war is over. It were well that the truth be known."

Really the tenet is sound, is it not, that while the exercise of candor may at times hurt the sensibilities of the nations, it consistently serves to dispel international distrust.

THOMAS CLEMENT LONERGAN.

New York City, New York.

June 1, 1929.



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# IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST!

## PART I

### THE PROPOSAL





# PART I

## THE PROPOSAL

### I

THE serious dilemma that confronted the United States Government after its entry into the World War, because of its helplessness to render any immediate assistance in the physical prosecution of the struggle, has never been delineated in actual detail. Military memoirs and journalistic transcripts have portrayed with bold strokes the prodigious difficulties that were attendant upon the enterprise of organizing the American Expeditionary Forces at so great distance from the home country. Occasionally there has appeared an allusion to a proposal of our Allies for the incorporation of American troops, as isolated units, in French and British divisions. The reference, either through lack of full knowledge of the facts or through tactful reticence, has rarely assumed aught more than the guise of superficial gesture. Nevertheless such a proposal, although not suggested until nine months or more had elapsed after the declaration of war by Congress, without any appreciable contri-

bution on our part to the vitality of the combat forces in the zone of contact, was so fiercely pressed that it threatened to miscarry the birth of the A.E.F. as an integral representation of its own people.

Fortunately the conception of his mission by General Pershing restrained him from acceding to any project which might interfere, even remotely, with the occupation of a sector in the battle line by a concrete American Army for defense and eventual exploitation under the high command and staff of its own officers. His determination became all the more admirable when, in spite of the realization that he was imperiling his own position as Commander-in-Chief, he continued in his refusal to be dissuaded from this resolve. It is true that his dogged persistence might have been subjected to severe rebuke had not the President and Secretary of War indicated confidence and support in his decisions. Yet this display by them could not have been entirely refreshing to his endeavors, for he must have been acutely sensitive to the political character of the responsibility imposed on his shoulders by an Administration's evasion of an issue, begotten from its own era of pacifist experiment in unpreparedness.

The chronicle of this episode, set forth in the documentary records of our French and British Allies, offers generous tribute, in its entirety, to a really remarkable achievement of our national career and not only contributes a vital chapter to our national history but also dispels, by its very candor, any mirage of antipathy in the premise that might be

conjured before the vision of future generations. At the same time, being a truthful exposé of our impotence before the menace of national disaster, it constitutes an effective indictment against the wantonness of an Administration that permits the insurance policy of national safety to lapse.

It is essential to preface the digest of the documents with a distinct appreciation of the military situation at the beginning of 1918, particularly in regard to the man-power of the Allies available for vigorous continuance of the war. After three years of harrowing casualties in the ranks of both belligerents, the conflict had confirmed itself into a "war of attrition." In theory, of course, this was nothing more than an attestation to the fact that there is no variant in modern warfare from the age-worn principle of destroying or capturing the hostile armies in order to defeat the foe decisively. On the Western front, however, the extensive battle-line, with its flanks denying by impassable obstacles the possibility of elastic maneuver in turning movement, precluded any attempt at tactical ingenuity to precipitate a general débâcle of the enemy. The character of the fighting was restricted to a series of local engagements, of greater or less magnitude, invariably launched in the generic form of frontal attacks. No matter how fantastic the illusions of the specialist had grown, the new agencies of motor transportation, of chemical invention, of movable fortresses, of aerial rencontre and bombing, of expertly registered artillery fire and explosive, all these



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continued to serve only as auxiliary devices, coordinated in concentrated effort, to induce the bodily encounter of the human element in order that the final "coup de grace" might be delivered with cold steel.

The "frontal attack," unaccompanied by flanking or other maneuver, even if successful, rarely accomplishes more than the gain of a limited position. Furthermore the vulnerability of the assailant's flanks to counter-attack, during the progress of the battles, makes the procedure exceedingly dangerous. "The wearing" effect of this type of warfare is devastating to the local and strategic reserves of assailant and defender alike. Consequently, since it was the only tactical method that could be pursued in France and Flanders, the struggle on those fronts became, in practice, a literal "war of attrition"; and conclusive victory was predicated in the end to the nations whose reserves of man-power retained the preponderating balance.

The grave apprehension which the situation at the beginning of 1918 gave rise to in British military and political circles is summarized concisely in a paper on the subject "British Effectives in France," to be found amongst the "Notes of the British General Staff on Operations during the period December, 1917-1918." The summary, based on the figures presented to the Supreme War Council by the Allied General Staff, gives a forecast of the reductions in British and French divisions that may be anticipated during the current year and expresses

a pessimistic view as to the probable value of the American contingent during the same period. It begins with the statement that the British reserves are accepted as 472,000 men for the remaining eleven months of 1918 (the paper is dated 28th January, 1918), available at the monthly rate of 43,000. The normal casualty list to be expected is averaged at 41,000 men per month or a total of 450,000 for the eleven months. To this number is added "the extraordinary casualties arising from battle which cannot safely be estimated at less than 500,000 men." In the event of severe fighting then the net loss becomes 478,000 men, which would reduce the combatant strength of the British forces in France by the end of the year to 825,000 men.

An analysis in the wastage of man-power of the Allies, on the Western front, alone, follows. The calculations are computed in terms of the division (approximately 15,000 men) for convenience. In the case of the British forces, consisting of fifty-seven divisions at the beginning of 1918, it is estimated that the excess of reinforcements monthly over the normal casualties will be 5,000 men or a total of 45,000 men, the equivalent of three divisions, by November 1st; from the United States, "if the plans materialize," may be expected the equivalent in men of eight divisions of Americans; and in the event of serious fighting a loss of thirty-three divisions must be anticipated. In November, then, the English Army will consist of a total of thirty-five divisions. In the case of the French forces, amount-

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ting to ninety-seven divisions in January, 1918, the annual contingent is counted on to furnish ten or twelve divisions; from American sources are allotted "perhaps" twelve divisions; and again an allowance for a loss of thirty-three divisions, on account of heavy fighting, is made. As the French had already announced the reduction of their forces on the Western front by twenty divisions at an early date, the French Army would consist in November of a total of sixty-eight divisions. The Allied forces, excluding the Belgians and the Portuguese, would comprise one hundred and three divisions, of whom twenty (American), it was observed, "are of doubtful value." Against these there would be opposed a minimum of one hundred and fifty-five divisions.

Concerning the American troops specifically the summary states: "The American situation is quite unsatisfactory, and although the equivalent of twenty divisions has been allowed for, it is extremely improbable that they will be of much military value. It will be well on in 1919 and more probably in 1920 before they are an Army in the sense in which the French or British Armies may be considered today."

In conclusion it was made plain that the situation of the French forces would not only *not* be ameliorated but must grow steadily worse; and that it was urgent, in so far as the British were affected, that steps be taken at once to obtain a source for the supply of a minimum of 450,000 men or thirty divisions. Only on this basis, it was emphasized,

might the military outlook be redeemed from its critical aspect.

It was not unnatural then, in searching for an expedient to meet the alarming crisis, that the British should have turned to the United States with its man-power as yet unimpaired by the havoc of battle. The proposition to incorporate American troops in the British ranks could not be charged as a mercenary employment of the forces of the United States, for the latter, having joined voluntarily in the common cause, would be acting in the most efficacious manner to bring prompt relief to the distress of its Allies. There were likewise many cogent arguments from a military standpoint that made the plan advantageous to the United States itself. The American troops, even the first arrivals of regulars, would consist for the greater part of raw recruits whose training would be more quickly assimilated and whose initial venture on the battlefield rendered far less hazardous, if undertaken in the midst of seasoned veterans. Experience made it seem unlikely that the necessary American staffs could be organized and trained to function efficiently at the headquarters of divisions and higher commands in less than a year or more,—especially as there had existed in our peace-time establishment no counterpart of the organization, nor even an instructional staff manual, to intimate the high degree of skilled management required for the intricate staff problems the war had developed. Finally there were the limitations upon tonnage, which might be taxed impro-

vidently, at the expense of troop space, by the overseas movements of complete divisions with the full quota of auxiliary troops and the impedimenta of equipment, transportation and animals, so requisite to the existence of a division as a self-contained unit.

With timely forethought Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (C.I.-G.S.),<sup>1</sup> of the British War Office, had, early in December, 1917, placed before the British War Cabinet the question of the impending deficit in the normal rate of replacements essential to the adequate maintenance of British effectives in France during 1918. The solution he suggested was a proposal to the United States Government that the quickest way to help the Allies would be for it to send men for inclusion, by companies or battalions, in British divisions, replacing similar British units and thus bringing up the total strength of British effectives to the desired maximum. The proposal undoubtedly met with the approval of the War Cabinet, for on December 2, 1917, Mr. Lloyd George wrote the following letter to Lord Reading who was in Paris at that time:—

MY DEAR READING:—

I am scribbling this in the train after a tumultuous passage across the channel.

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Robertson was Chief of the Imperial General Staff until the spring of 1918, when he was succeeded by Sir Henry Wilson.



## THE PROPOSAL

II

The C.I.G.S. is very anxious you should place the enclosed before Colonel House. I entirely concur and urge its acceptance. We shall be hard pressed to hold our own and keep Italy standing during 1918. Our man-power is pretty well exhausted. We can only call up men of 45-50 and boys of 17. France is done. The American soldiers will not be ready to fight as an Army until late in 1918. Our experience proves that meanwhile we must keep the fight going. Even half-trained American companies or battalions would fight well if mixed with 2 or 3 year veterans.

Beg H. to consider this favorably.

Yours

(Sgd.) D. L. G.

The inclosure<sup>1</sup> is in the form of a memorandum without heading or signature. It contains a concise statement of Sir William Robertson's proposal, although inasmuch as the Prime Minister entirely concurred in it and urged its acceptance, it would have the significant value, upon presentation by Lord Reading, of coming from Mr. Lloyd George himself. Beginning with the assertion that Germany obviously has a better chance of winning the war before America can exert her full strength than she will have afterwards, it points out that "Russia's defection" has enabled Germany to strengthen her forces to such an extent on the Italian and Western front that she will likely try to gain a decision in the spring or early summer. Italy's weakness, France's

<sup>1</sup> For the full context of this memorandum see Appendix No. I.

diminishing man-power and Great Britain's inability to keep her divisions even approximately up to strength throughout the summer, especially if there is heavy fighting in the spring, are enumerated in conjunction with the fact that it will take America many months to put an appreciable force of trained *divisions* in the field. The proposal is then made:—

Would America therefore be ready to help in another way, as a temporary measure? When she first came into the war we hoped she might send some men for inclusion in the British Armies, as being clearly the quickest way of helping, but for reasons we quite understand, she preferred to retain her national identity. No doubt she still desires to do so, but over and above the preparation of her divisions, and without interfering with it, would it be possible for her to provide a company of infantry to replace a British company in such number of British battalions as America could bring over the men? Even 100 such companies would be of the greatest value. Every consideration would of course be given to the companies, and if desired they could later be recalled and posted to the American divisions. It is thought that this mingling of American and British troops would establish a close and cordial feeling between the two Armies, and would also give the American troops useful training. If this system is not possible would America find a battalion to replace a British battalion in as many brigades as possible? There would be no insuperable difficulties in meeting American wishes in any such matters as discipline, rations and general maintenance. The only difficulty is American national sentiment, which we quite understand. On the other hand the system is clearly one which would the most

rapidly afford much needed help during, perhaps, the most critical period of the war.

2/12/17.

Lord Reading lost no time in the execution of his mission, for the Chief of the Imperial General Staff was able to report at a meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street on December 5, 1917 (Minute 3, War Cabinet 292), that "the question of placing units of the United States Infantry into battalions or brigades of British Infantry had been cordially received by Colonel House, to whom it had been referred by the Prime Minister."

The motive of the British Government, in initiating the proposal in this manner, rather than through General Pershing, cannot be impeached. In principle the plan contemplated the adoption by the United States Government of a policy that might give rise to domestic political consequences. The presence on the Continent of Colonel House, in the capacity of the unofficial ambassador of the White House, made recourse to him, therefore, the natural procedure. Indeed in all its moves throughout these negotiations, the frankness of the British Government is outstanding; even Sir William Robertson, who was inclined to be excessively subtle in his later exchange of views with General Pershing on the subject, was shrewd enough to prophesy, in his letter of December 6th to Sir Douglas Haig, the non-acceptance of the proposal as incompatible with our national

characteristics and feelings, almost at the instant of its presentation to Colonel House.

The "cordial reception" of the proposal by Colonel House did not, it was understood, imply the certainty of its approval by the United States. In the face of the grave situation confronting the Allies, which had not been exaggerated in the drawing, it was only natural that Colonel House should be inclined to favor the most apparently expeditious remedy, the more so as both General Bliss, our representative on the Supreme War Council at Versailles, and Admiral Sims in London, seemed disposed to be convinced by the logic of the British. Moreover Colonel House had received a letter from M. Clemenceau on December 6th, which indirectly lent encouragement to the British proposal. The French Prime Minister informed Colonel House that he, Clemenceau, was going to insist that the dominating idea which had pervaded the deliberations of the Allied Conference just concluded, namely the necessity of restricting Allied importations in order to free as much tonnage as possible for the transport of American troops,<sup>1</sup> be carried into immediate effect. In the concrete the letter treated at length of means of facilitating the rate of arrival of American troops, yet, in its bearing on the shortage of effectives amongst the French and British, it might have been construed to infer that

<sup>1</sup> "De restreindre leurs importations, afin de liberer le plus de tonnage disponible, en vue du transport des troupes Americaines." (Lettre de M. Clemenceau au Colonel House, Paris, le 6 Decembre, 1917.)

the tonnage made available by France and Great Britain, through self-denial of badly needed supplies, should be utilized to the greatest extent by the United States for the transport of man-power. This would discountenance the shipment of American divisions as integral units, because of the amount of tonnage that would have to be diverted to component elements other than infantry and artillery. In the end, notwithstanding, the attitude of Colonel House reflected again the confidence of the Administration in the discernment and decision of the man it had chosen to command the American forces in France; and he promised discreetly no more binding action than a willingness to take up the matter with General Pershing and, upon his return, with the President.

The parting attitude of Colonel House, before leaving for the United States, is described by Sir William Robertson at a meeting of the British War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, on December 10, 1917 (Minute 13, War Cabinet 295).

13. It was suggested that one way of solving the man-power problem would be for the drafts of American troops, as they reached France, to be incorporated as drafts in our forces, since though the transport of completely equipped divisions from the United States presented great difficulties, owing to lack of tonnage, the transport of men could probably be effected. By this means the shortage in the Allies' man-power could be made good.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained, in



reference to War Cabinet 292, Minute 3, that, although the matter of incorporating American troops with British units had been put forward to Colonel House in Paris, the idea had been to incorporate either entire companies in British battalions, or entire battalions in British brigades, and it could hardly be expected that the United States Government would agree to their men being used as drafts. Colonel House had stated that he would refer the matter to General Pershing, and then to the President of the United States upon his return.

In the meantime Sir William Robertson had notified Sir Douglas Haig of these events, by sending him a copy of Mr. Lloyd George's letter and enclosure. In forwarding these Sir William Robertson explained that although the proposal had been received "very favorably" by Colonel House, much depended upon what Generals Bliss<sup>1</sup> and Pershing, whom Colonel House had not seen up to the time of receiving it, were going to recommend. He further expressed the hope that Sir Douglas Haig would discover no great obstacle to the plan and asserted that, while there might be objections to it, none were of a sufficiency to override the necessity of securing as many men as possible. "I doubt very much," he wrote, "whether the proposal will really be accepted, and in any case it will probably take some months to materialize."<sup>2</sup>

His communication, though couched informally,

<sup>1</sup> General Tasker H. Bliss was the U. S. representative on the Supreme War Council, at Versailles.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix No. 2.

was more than merely informatory. It actually instructed the British Commander-in-Chief as to the attitude that he was to assume,—an incident to be borne in mind in connection with the subsequent interview between Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing on the subject.

Sir Douglas Haig replied on December 8, 1917, that he had "a talk with General Bliss" on the matter two days before, and proceeded to outline a method for the practical application of the plan. In so doing he was led, perhaps in his eagerness to find a way of appeasing American national prejudices, into a divergent conception of the idea from that of Sir William Robertson. In his scheme, Sir Douglas Haig was definite on the point that, because of disciplinary and legal difficulties, the incorporation must be by battalions, batteries and brigades, and not by smaller bodies. He suggested that American battalions should be introduced into British brigades, one per brigade at the start, in selected British divisions, preferably serving on the *southern* part of the British front. Gradually each brigade in these divisions was in turn to be Americanized. As soon as the divisions became partly Americanized, "or from the very outset if necessary," they were to be placed under the command of General Pershing or an American General designated by him, but the British divisional and brigade commanders and staffs were to be retained until a "division became at least half American personnel." The British



battalions, that were replaced by American units, were recommended to be broken up to recruit other British establishments to full strength. This system, he argued, would ensure the gradual substitution of American units for the British formations which could not be maintained, and, incidentally, would tend to fix the location of the American forces alongside the British, an arrangement, he observed, that General Bliss had intimated was much desired by the Americans, though difficult of attainment by direct means.

Sir Douglas Haig's scheme was intended, no doubt, to secure for the British what Mr. Lloyd George had importuned of Colonel House,—drafts of men for incorporation in the British divisions,—but in such a way as to lead the American people to believe that the process was nothing more than a progressive system for building up American divisions as rapidly and efficiently as possible. In this belief the “sentiment” of the home country would be lulled into complacency and the co-operation of General Pershing rendered more likely because of comparative assurance on the same score. Yet the scheme, while in principle reinforcing the strength of the British ranks, was in practice actually utilizing the British forces to expedite the formation of American divisions. This was not Sir William Robertson's idea at all. His proposal was based on the incorporation of American companies or battalions, raised over and above the drafts called to complete the divisions already in process of mobili-

zation in the United States, and without interfering with the preparation of the latter for the American Army in France. The "orphan" companies or battalions so raised, were to be incorporated in British divisions as isolated units, with no intention of those divisions being Americanized. At a later date, perhaps, when the emergency had passed, the American troops might be withdrawn from the British ranks and gathered together to form new American divisions.

It is important to note the different conception of the project, whether deliberate or otherwise, by Sir Douglas Haig at this initial stage, since it explains much of the later confusion that resulted when the French were introduced into the negotiations. Another interesting feature of the British Commander-in-Chief's scheme was his prompt elimination of any consideration of incorporation by "companies." His advice, however, to work it "by battalions, batteries and brigades," was evidently given in terms of British organization rather than of our own. In the American Army the regiment, and not the battalion, as is the case in the British service, is normally the administrative and tactical unit. There was also distinguishable on his part a technical apprehension that the command and staff for the higher American headquarters could not be developed as quickly as the actual combat troops,—a fear impelled, no doubt, by the recollections of the bitter experiences that had fallen to the lot of the British in the earlier years of the war through

their insufficiency of adequately trained staff personnel.

Without waiting for further word from Sir William Robertson, which was entirely proper in the circumstances, Sir Douglas Haig began "to feel out" General Pershing on the subject. Whereas this should have been accredited to him as an adroit move, it must really be charged as an unconscious blunder, unless he was fully aware of the complications that might result. For while he was approaching the American Commander-in-Chief with one sort of proposal, his Government was soliciting the agreement of the United States to another of quite a different character. Through the Deputy Chief of Staff at the British G.H.Q., instructions<sup>1</sup> were transmitted to Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards Brigadier-General) C. M. Wagstaff, who was the head of the British Mission with our G.H.Q. at Chaumont, to place the scheme of Sir Douglas Haig before General Pershing. These instructions amplified it in detail and were accompanied by diagrams of American organization, illustrating the ease with which the interchangeability might be effected. The preparation of this data for the full understanding of General Wagstaff, must have caused a more comprehensive analysis of American Army organization to be made and a further modification in Sir Douglas Haig's scheme had resulted. The similarity, in an administrative sense, between the American regiment and the

<sup>1</sup> The detailed amplification of Sir Douglas Haig's "scheme" is given in Appendix No. 3.

British battalion was recognized; and the proposal as presented by General Wagstaff to General Pershing was to be set forth in terms of "regiments." The significance of this from our point of view, as was later emphasized by General Wagstaff himself, was important because in the American Army the regiment is ordinarily the lowest unit authorized to carry the national colors.

General Wagstaff reported the result of his efforts by telegram dated December 15, 1917:—

I have put proposal before General Pershing. He will consider it and let me know. He appears unwilling to commit himself to any particular sector nor does he care to have his units go into the line piecemeal. I hope he sees the point of quicker training. He is grateful for offer of help in this direction.

And again by telegram dated December 18, 1917:—

General Harboard told me this morning that General Pershing could not accept proposal. Chief reasons are (1) Difficulties with the French; (2) Desires to be self-contained; (3) Training of staffs is required before that of units. I am to have another interview with General Pershing tomorrow. General Harboard seemed inclined to consider scheme when argued.<sup>1</sup>

## II

With the arrival of Colonel House in Washington the proposal was, of course, laid at once before the

<sup>1</sup> General James Harboard was, at this time, Chief of Staff of the A. E. F.

President. In view of the circumstances attendant upon its presentation, the action adopted by the Administration was at least unusual. The Secretary of War telegraphed General Pershing, by direction of the President, full authority to make the final decision in the matter "after consultation with the French and British Commanders-in-Chief." In other words, a request of the British Government upon the United States Government was referred by the latter to an individual, even though that individual happened to be the General of its Armies in the Field, for answer. Instead of asking General Pershing for his recommendation and accepting it in full or in part as the basis of a reply, which should have been rendered by the United States to Great Britain, the Administration either through its inability to grasp the situation or through timidity to meet the consequences, shifted the burden to the American Commander-in-Chief and was content to confine its own response to a mere display of the Secretary of War's telegram to the French and British Ambassadors.

There could be but one reaction on the part of the British Government to the move of the United States and this was exhibited in the meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, on December 21, 1917 (Minute 12, War Cabinet 304).

12. The Prime Minister read a decypher of a telegram just received from Sir C. Spring-Rice, dated the 20th December, containing a paraphrase of the telegram sent



by American Secretary for War to General Pershing, giving General Pershing a free hand regarding the decision to be come to concerning the amalgamation of American forces in French and British divisions.

The War Cabinet requested Lord Milner to see General Pershing in Paris, and to urge him to accede to the representations made in regard to this matter by the British Government and by the General Staff.

The context of Mr. Baker's telegram to General Pershing had undoubtedly been made known to all the Allied Ambassadors simultaneously in Washington. The situation it created was one which could not have been completely satisfactory to the British War Office. It invested General Pershing with absolute authority to make the final decision regarding the proposed amalgamation of American troops not only in British but also in *French* divisions. Whether or not the British advances, made previously to Colonel House and General Pershing, had up to this time been known to the French, nevertheless the instructions from the American Secretary of War skillfully prevented any misunderstanding in respect to the impartial attitude of the United States towards its Allies. Likewise, by indicating that future negotiations should be conducted directly with the American Commander-in-Chief, the message intimated the desire of the President that the employment of other channels, diplomatic or political, to force the decision, be discontinued. Consequently there remained for the British Cabinet

only the alternative of taking up the question officially with General Pershing, which it undertook to commence at once through the medium of Lord Milner, the British Secretary of State for War, as the representative of the British Government.

On December 22nd, the day following this meeting of the War Cabinet, there came a note to Colonel Fagalde, the French Military Attaché in London, through the Liaison Section of the British War Office:—

#### AMERICA.

From French Ambassador, Washington, received December 20th.

The United States Secretary for War has wired to General Pershing that, in compliance with the request of Great Britain and France, prompted by the expectation of a strong German offensive, the President agrees to the American forces being, if necessary, amalgamated with French and British in units as small as the company. General Pershing is to make the final decision in this matter after consultation with the British and French Commanders-in-Chief. It is suggested to him that it might be suitable for the American forces to be placed close to the point of junction of the British and French so as to enable them to be used wherever their assistance can be most useful; this is however, left to General Pershing's judgement.

On December 24th, Colonel Fagalde received another note from the same section:—



## FRANCE

General Foch informed General Petain by letter dated December 23rd, that President Wilson agrees to American troops being employed as isolated units with French units if necessary.<sup>1</sup>

In so far as Colonel Fagalde is concerned, these notes were merely of an informatory nature, coming in the usual manner of kindred communications that emanated periodically from the Liaison Section of the British War Office. This Section handled all Foreign Military Attachés and served as a center for the distribution to them of the daily communiques and other collated and evaluated information pertinent to the progress of events generally and to the interests of their own countries specifically. In the latter case the information might take the form of an extract or note from the composite whole. The sending of these notes to Colonel Fagalde, therefore, could only be regarded as part of the routine procedure devised in order that all Military Attachés would be kept "au current" with successive developments, even inside their own governmental circles.

In this instance the source of the information was French. The original telegram of the French Ambassador from Washington, which formed the substance of the first note, must, of course, have been addressed to his own Government in Paris.

<sup>1</sup> General Petain was Commander-in-Chief of the French forces on the Western front; General Foch had not as yet been appointed Allied Generalissimo.

Subsequently, with the approval of the latter, it found its way to the British War office either through the British Military Attaché in Paris or through the French Embassy in London. Similarly the authority for the statement contained in the second note must have been given by the French War Office. The information then, of French origin, being disseminated by the British Liaison Section amongst all the Military Attachés in London, who in turn would transmit it to their own Embassies and probably directly to their own War Offices, effectively camouflaged the earlier endeavors of the British, in private contact with Colonel House, from the suspicion of purely selfish motive at the expense of French participation in the deal.

The notes to Colonel Fagalde bear additional interest in that they record the official entrance of the French in the enterprise. The first note is worthy of still further attention because it shows the adroit interpretation of Mr. Baker's telegram made by the French Ambassador<sup>1</sup> in Washington for his Government. The action of the President was reported as resulting "from the request of Great Britain and France," and from "the expectation of a strong German offensive." It is obvious, however, from the statement "the President agrees to the American forces being, if necessary, amalgamated with French and British in *units as small as the company*," that the action was "prompted" by the original request made solely by Mr. Lloyd George.

<sup>1</sup> M. Jusserand.

This is all the more apparent when the reluctance of Sir Douglas Haig to such a phase, because of disciplinary and legal difficulties, is recalled,—the result of a military state of mind that would certainly have found echo amongst the French had the proposal been drafted with their co-operation.

The reference by the French Ambassador to the possible location of the American forces in the line, suggested to General Pershing as most conducive for their effective use should his final decision be favorable thereto, was subtly introduced. The suggestion was treated by the French Ambassador as though he might have been a party to it; yet he did not charge the responsibility for it and was explicit in pointing out that the matter was left to General Pershing's judgement. Ostensibly he was apprising his Government of the sequence of events in Washington; actually he was warning it of a possible development that might prove undesirable. And the French Government, supplying the British with the copy of his telegram was inoffensively giving notice that it was aware, and sensitively so, of the question of the future American position in the line being raised, but considered the solution to have reached nothing more than the suggestive stage.

### III

The knowledge that the proposal of the British Government had been made common as well to the French by the United States Government, was given to Sir Douglas Haig in a telegram from Sir William

Robertson dated December 26, 1917. Making clear that full authority in the final decision had been delegated to General Pershing by the President, the Chief of the British Imperial General Staff reiterated the British stand in the matter:—

Our proposal, as you are aware, was that trained American divisions now in France should not be touched but that America should send infantry units over from America to be trained on this side and have their equipment completed by us here with a view to amalgamation. As soon as possible you should see Pershing and let me know your views and his.

Meanwhile, in accordance with his instructions from the Secretary of War, General Pershing had begun his "consultations" with the French and British Commanders-in-Chief, by a visit to General Petain at the French General Headquarters. The tenor of their conversation is briefly described in a report sent by Brigadier General G. S. Clive, the Chief of the British Mission there, to the British War Office in London:—

General Antoine (in absence of General Petain) said that in the interview of General Pershing with General Petain, the former had shown little disposition to attach American units to French divisions, and that the proposal had made no headway.

As regards the Field-Marshal's (Sir Douglas Haig's) scheme, General Petain is ready to accede to any plan that will hasten the training of American troops and con-

siders this entirely a matter for the British and Americans to settle between them. He thinks possibly a little reflection, or a word from his Government, may bring General Pershing round to the Field-Marshal's scheme.

26/12/17.

The discussion between General Pershing and the French Commander-in-Chief related to the proposal set forth in Mr. Baker's telegram and in General Foch's letter to General Petain, namely the incorporation of American troops as isolated units in French divisions. It was by no means coincident with the original British idea nor with Sir Douglas Haig's "scheme." The latter, which General Petain quite correctly regarded as a method of "hastening the training of American troops" and which he believed to be "entirely a matter for the British and Americans to settle between themselves," had never been really presented to General Pershing. The advances made to the latter by General Wagstaff, on behalf of Sir Douglas Haig, stipulated an expansive program of introducing American battalions and regiments into selected British divisions with the inducement that, as the proportion of American troops increased in these divisions, they would gradually become Americanized and pass to American control. It will appear later that when the "scheme" of Sir Douglas Haig was outlined to General Pershing, solely as a means of speeding up the training of the A.E.F., it was appreciatively entertained by him.

These new developments must have been disconcerting to the British War Cabinet; but more so must have been the self-assurance of General Petain in announcing the measure, with its implied menace to General Pershing, that was to be resorted to, if necessary, in order to coerce the latter's consent. An appeal by General Petain to his Government, if insistently pursued by it, would only have precipitated the rigid application of the terms of the Washington telegram,—an effect highly undesirable in every way from the British standpoint.

The disquietude of the British Cabinet was displayed in its meeting at 10 Downing Street on December 27, 1917 (Minute 4, War Cabinet 307):—

4. In reference to War Cabinet 304, Minute 12, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the question of the amalgamation of American forces with the French and British divisions had become rather confused owing to the intervention of the French.

The War Cabinet decided that the discussion of this matter should be deferred until the return from Paris of Lord Milner, who had been requested to interview General Pershing on the subject.

Before Lord Milner was to have this interview, General Pershing, having already taken up the question with General Petain, had in turn conferred with the British Commander-in-Chief. The report of this latter meeting is contained in a "Note on my talk with General Pershing," dated December 30,



1917, and sent by Sir Douglas Haig to the British War Office:—

General Pershing came to see me at Montreuil on Friday 28th December, 1917, and stayed the night.

He explained his arrangements for training the American Forces in France.

The opinion I formed on these is that the best results we can hope for by May is that one Corps Staff with four Divisions will be fit to operate as a unit.

I urged on him the importance of speeding up his training methods, particularly as regards the training of higher leaders and Staffs, and the urgency of bringing as many Infantry as possible to France.

I put forward a scheme by which the British E.F. in France can train the following:—

- 6 Divisions and Staffs, etc.
- 3 Corps Staffs, (with Commanders).
- 1 Army Headquarters.

I also offered to allot to the American Forces an area for training close to Amiens and told him that we could arrange to deal with 2,000 men daily at Havre. These men will be brought from America via England, and I understood that Southampton could be made available for this traffic.

General Pershing agreed to urge his Government to develop the Southampton route (in addition to the routes already being used). If this can be done he will gladly take advantage of my offer of a training area near Amiens. He will also send certain Commanders and Staffs for training with the British in France.

He also asked me to place the advantage of the South-



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ampton-Havre route before British Authorities, and requested their support in developing American Transportation by it.

(Intd.) D. H.

There were two salient features that characterized this "Note." Firstly, if the subject of the incorporation of American troops as isolated units in British divisions, was ever raised at all, no mention of it was made in the reported account. Secondly the line of reasoning of the British Commander-in-Chief is strangely affirmative with that adopted by General Pershing at the time, December 18, 1917, he declined to accept the proposal proffered by General Wagstaff on behalf of Sir Douglas Haig. Especially is this similarity marked in the emphatic precedence which Sir Douglas Haig gives to the training of higher leaders and Staffs. This phase of the American Commander-in-Chief's task was an essential objective to be attained in order that the rapid formation of an integral American Army might become a reality. It may be conjectured whether the guidance of the conference into the channels it followed, was due to the dominating tenaciousness of General Pershing's personality, or whether it grew out of the willing concession of Sir Douglas Haig, convinced, as he evidently was, by soldierly intuitiveness that the original plan was deficient psychologically. Nevertheless Sir William Robertson, unmistakably dissatisfied at the outcome of the Montreuil conference, wrote again to Sir Douglas

Haig, explaining the different shapes the project had now assumed and designating the one officially favored by the British Government:—

C.I.G.S.

0153/3081.

3rd January, 1918.

THE FIELD MARSHAL.

Commanding-in-Chief.

British Armies in France.

With reference to my telegram No. 48732 of December 26, 1917, concerning the acceleration of the arrival of American troops, the matter has become somewhat complicated owing to the fact that several different proposals have been put forward. I think it advisable, therefore, to restate the case.

*First Proposal.*

The Prime Minister made a proposal to Colonel House for using any infantry which may be surplus to those which can be formed into completely equipped divisions under General Pershing, by incorporating them temporarily by small units in the British Army. The proposal was that they should be brought over as soon as possible from America and be trained and equipped in either England or France, and that they should then be used as companies or battalions to reinforce British divisions. It was made quite clear that we did not wish to delay the formation of General Pershing's Army in any way. This proposal Colonel House undertook to recommend to President Wilson upon his return to the United States.

*Second Proposal.*

On the 20th December a telegram was received from the British Ambassador stating that President Wilson had accorded to General Pershing full authority to use the forces under his command for amalgamation with French and British forces by regiments and companies, after consultation with you and General Petain. This is an entirely different proposition to that made Colonel House. It would result in delaying the formation of General Pershing's Army, and this I consider inadvisable, even if General Pershing should be willing to carry it out.

*Third Proposal.*

I understand that as a result of a meeting with General Pershing on the 28th December, you have now put forward a 3rd proposal for accelerating the arrival of certain units of General Pershing's Army, for attaching these units to British formations for training, with a view to the ultimate conversion of a certain number of British formations into American formations. This amounts to accelerating the formation of General Pershing's Army.

The War Cabinet are very desirous of carrying out the first proposal, as it undoubtedly offers the best prospect of making additional American troops available quickly.

The Board of Trade have submitted to the War Cabinet a scheme for removing 200,000 tons of shipping from the carriage of foodstuffs and using it to bring over 200,000 American Infantry during the next four months, over and above any numbers which are being transported in accordance with the American programme for General Pershing's Army. The object of this proposal is to provide immediate reinforcements in man-power, and

the scheme is contingent on General Pershing's agreement to the incorporation of these men by companies or battalions in the British Army until they are sufficiently trained to be collected into larger units.

I hope to proceed to France shortly to discuss the matter with General Pershing, and will inform you as to the result.

The adoption of this proposal need not interfere with any arrangements which you may make with General Pershing for assisting him in the training of the American troops under his command.

(Sgd.) W. R. ROBERTSON

General

C.I.G.S.

The distinction drawn by Sir William Robertson between the first and second proposals, became in actual practice, a very fine one. The taking of companies or regiments from the American divisions already in France or from those in process of mobilization in the United States would, he argued and rightly, delay the formation of General Pershing's Army by hampering constantly the complete development of these organizations. But the sending of masses of men, drafted over and above the needs of Pershing's divisions, in surplus British bottoms provided by the British Board of Trade through curtailment of its own supply system, to be trained, organized and equipped as infantry companies and battalions overseas for incorporation in British divisions, would not, in his opinion, interfere with the scheduled progress of the American Expeditionary

Forces in France. Inasmuch, however, as the value of the plan was dependant upon its immediate operation, the drafting of the men for overseas incorporation in French and British divisions would have to be given priority in the United States over that for filling the ranks of the home divisions. The result in either case was bound to cause corresponding delay and perhaps miscarriage of the birth of the American Army in France.

Plainly put the first proposal was nothing more than a plan for recruiting the British forces with American troops—and the British forces alone, for Sir William Robertson was, in due course of time, prepared to show the impracticability of the plan from the French standpoint. No subterfuge, such as the promise of eventually grouping the American units into larger bodies until an American Army was formed on the British front, was ever entertained by him or advocated. For the same reasons the first proposal was repugnant to General Pershing.

The mutual understanding reached by General Pershing and Sir Douglas Haig at Montreuil must have been influenced by their realization of the basic similarity between the first and second proposals. The supposition of a frank exchange of views between the two soldiers in the field, not included in the written account, has already been advanced. In any event the third proposal, which Sir William Robertson characterized as tending solely to accelerate the formation of General Pershing's Army, but





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#### THE IMPERIAL BRITISH WAR CABINET

In the garden of No. 10 Downing Street. The members are (left to right seated): Mr. A. Henderson, Lord Milner, Lord Curzon, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Robert Borden, Mr. Massey and General J. C. Smuts. (Standing in middle): Sir S. Sinha, the Maharajah of Bikanir, Sir J. Meston, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Walter Long, Sir J. Werd, Sir George Perley, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Hazen. (Standing back row): Captain Amery, Admiral Jellicoe, Sir Edward Carson, Lord Derby, General Morris, Sir M. Hankey, Mr. Lambert, Major Storr.





to which he offered no objection as long as it did not interfere with the first proposal, was the full tenor of the Montreuil meeting.

The grounds upon which Sir William Robertson based his assertion that Colonel House undertook "to recommend" the first proposal to President Wilson, are difficult to ascertain. Colonel House had obligated himself only "to refer the matter to General Pershing, and then to the President of the United States, upon his return." It may be that Sir William Robertson had received later assurance, either directly or indirectly, from Colonel House that the presentation of the proposal to the President would be made in more positive form, but it is not unlikely that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stretched the point a bit in this respect. An analysis of his behavior throughout these parleys discloses his tendency, on more than one occasion, to resuscitate the dying substance of a statement or telegram by the exercise of moderate exaggeration.

#### IV

At the beginning of 1918 a "Summary of French Notes on the American Army" had been prepared and issued by the French War Office.<sup>1</sup> It opened with a brief description of the state of the American Army on January 1, 1918, showing that it consisted of 44 divisions of which 39 were in course of mobilization in the United States, 4 were under instruction in camps in France and 1 was disembarking in

<sup>1</sup> For the complete summary see Appendix No. 4.

France. It then discussed and compared intelligently the three component parts of the American Army, namely the Regulars, the National Guard and the National Army. There followed comments on such subjects as the State of Instruction in the United States, Improvements carried out or proposed, State of the American Army in France, Disposal of Americans on Arrival, General Methods of Training, Armament, Transport of American Army to France, etc.

The summary illustrated the thoroughness and accuracy of the French General Staff in analytical speculation. The appreciation of the three component parts of the American Army was soundly delineated, even though it be granted that the source of the information upon which the comparison was based, emanated largely from American sources. The treatment of the other phases was equally reliable, but the most interesting feature, in relation to the question of the incorporation of American troops in French divisions, was contained in the following announcement:—

The French Commander-in-Chief considers that in view of the present military situation the problem of the training of the Americans cannot be considered in the same form as 6 months ago. A solution must be found which will ensure the rapid training of units while beginning to employ them. The following procedure should be adopted. A French division should receive at the same time a regiment of infantry and one or two groups of artillery already partially trained. The French division

would take charge of their training. These would ultimately be regrouped into American divisions.

This sudden change of policy confirms the impression that, prior to the dispatch of Mr. Baker's telegram to General Pershing, there had been no active impulse on the part of the French to solicit the incorporation of American troops, *as isolated units*, in their own divisions. The earlier French plans for participation in such phases of the American adventure as transport, disembarkation and port facilities, location and extent of training camps, schools and areas, etc., seem to have been formulated entirely on the basis of assisting the rapid development of the American contingent as an integral fighting machine. In particular the "methods of training," originally advocated by the French, while contemplating the affiliation of American units with French units of corresponding organizational structure in "rear" or "training" areas, including short hours of duty in the front line trenches of French divisions for experience, predicated the permanent entry of the American troops into battle, when deemed sufficiently expert, by divisions under their own commanders and staffs.

Immediately after the receipt of General Foch's letter of December 23rd, however, the French Commander-in-Chief, General Petain, decides "that in view of the present military situation the problem of training the Americans cannot be considered in the same form as 6 months ago." The solution he

proposes is more or less a counterpart of the "scheme" of Sir Douglas Haig, which had been made known to him before the Montreuil meeting, as is evident from the statement made by his Chief of Staff, General Antoine, to General Clive on December 26, 1917. A degree of harmony was beginning to exist between the French and British Commanders-in-Chief in regard to the practical course to be undertaken for the immediate use of the American reinforcements. Nor was the American Commander-in-Chief averse to their ideas. The "scheme" advanced at Montreuil in no wise threatened the breaking up or hampering of the growth of the American Forces either in France or the United States. Especially advantageous would be the additional impetus furnished by the operation of the Southampton-Havre route, should the British Government acquiesce in the project. It was equally acceptable to General Pershing in that it hastened the training and practical experience of his soldiers and ensured a more rapid arrival of the components of his Army.

The summary concludes with a recommendation that a restriction be placed on the monthly rate of arrivals of American troops,—a maximum of four divisions per month and a minimum of two. This was made, no doubt, after consideration of the availability of tonnage, port facilities and billeting accommodations of French sources solely, as distinguished from those belonging to or reserved for the British. Its application did not interfere in any way

with Sir Douglas Haig's offer to receive and train six American divisions, three Army Corps and one Army Headquarters, via the Southampton-Havre route, in the Amiens area and vicinity.

If on the one hand, a common understanding was being approached by the three Commanders-in-Chief regarding the more rapid training and formation of the American Expeditionary Forces in France, on the other Sir William Robertson was by no means prepared to give up his project for recruiting the British divisions with American replacements. In his formal and official letter of January 3, 1918, to Sir Douglas Haig, the announcement of his proposed journey to France, "to discuss the matter with General Pershing," was nothing more than a thinly-veiled expression of his dissatisfaction at the manner in which the British Commander-in-Chief had handled the affair. Hence he determined to try his own skill without even waiting, apparently, for the result of Lord Milner's meeting with General Pershing.

Before his departure for France a telegram from the British Mission in Paris arrived at the British War Office. The following extract, relayed in the customary form of a "Note to Colonel Fagalde," indicated that the prospective location of an American sector of the battle line, was beginning to engage the attention of the French Government:—

3. On January 1st the French Prime Minister instructed the French Commander-in-Chief to confer at

French G.H.Q. with Pershing and Haig as to the part of the front on which the American troops will be employed. He added that the question will be settled by Supreme War Council in case of disagreement.

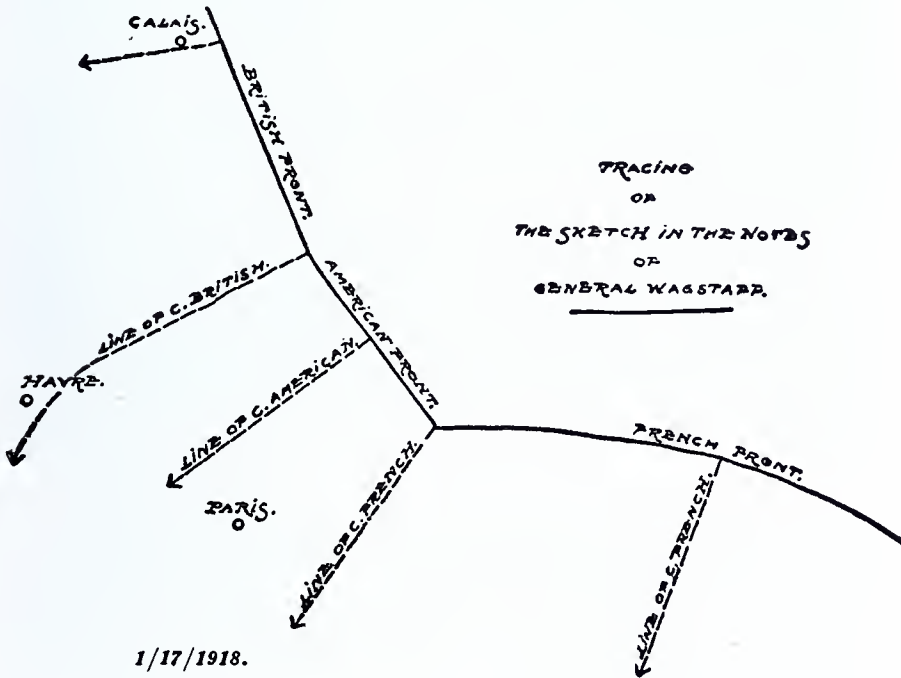
The French Government was judiciously referring the decision in this matter to the three Commanders-in-Chief,—but with reservations. For it was fully cognizant of the mutual inclination of both the Americans and British towards the designation of an American sector between the British and French Armies.

An excellent argument for this, and one based on sound strategic as well as tactical reasoning, was set forth in the "Notes on the position in the line to be taken up by the American Army," prepared about this time by General Wagstaff and forwarded to London.<sup>1</sup> The document considered at some length the questions of the railroads, lines of communication for the American forces from the ports assigned to them by the French, the future "combined" operations by the Allied Armies "on a great scale" in which "the main offensive power would have to be assumed by the American Army" and the inducement that, by this arrangement, the recapture of Alsace and Lorraine would fall to the French. It urged, therefore, that "the best front for the American Army" must be found to be "between the left of the French Army and the right of the British." A rough sketch, not drawn to scale, illustrated the

<sup>1</sup> The complete "Notes" will be found in Appendix No. 5.



proposed readjustment of the front line on the Western Front in so far as the Americans, British and French were concerned:



It was further pointed out that any other arrangement than the above tended to a separation of the Allied Armies in the case of a reverse. For the British would have to fall back Westward in order to cover their communications with the Channel ports, the French must take the natural line of retirement to the South and Southwest and the Americans, if "encadres" with the French Army, that is if distributed between French Armies, would also have to fall back in the same direction, and there would result the grave danger of a gap being opened

between the left of the French and the right of the British. "On the other hand by the arrangement proposed in this paper, each Army would be directly covering its proper bases and lines of communication and the danger of a gap opening in the area between the Somme and the Seine would be guarded against; whilst any German Army attempting to push through to Paris would find itself in a most dangerous position."

Nevertheless it could be anticipated, almost with certainty, that the French would never agree to the above allocation, for it practically committed the safety of Paris into the hands of the American troops.

## v

Sir William Robertson was accompanied to Paris by Sir J. Maclay, the Shipping Controller of the British Government and the meetings between them and General Pershing occurred on January 9 and 10, 1918. The stenographic reports of the conferences follow:—

NOTES OF A MEETING BETWEEN  
- GENERAL PERSHING, SIR WM. ROBERTSON, AND  
SIR J. MACLAY, SHIPPING CONTROLLER, ON  
JANUARY 9, 1918.

*First Discussion*—on the question of the use of the large liners and the ports to which they would go.

Sir Wm. Robertson asked General Pershing about the discussion with Sir D. Haig, and General Pershing ex-

plained that the idea was to use Southampton instead of the outer roadsteads at Brest etc., as by this the round trips could be shortened, and men be brought over quicker. It might be possible to send also other ships, at present discharging slowly at Bordeaux, etc., to Southampton. This scheme had in view the quicker formation of the American divisions.

Sir J. Maclay then explained that, as a result of a discussion last night with the French authorities it might be possible to devise a better scheme, by which the naval quays, etc., at Brest, Cherbourg, and L'Orient could be used. This would be a much safer scheme. Further, it would get over the difficulties of unloading a quantity of baggage at Southampton. Against this General Pershing said that there was no idea of bringing much baggage with the troops.

In answer to a question by Sir Wm. Robertson, General Pershing said that the railway problem of getting troops away from Brest, etc., would be easier perhaps than from the ports of the Channel.

General Pershing thought that the question of naval escort would be a difficulty as regards Brest. It was pointed out however that the escort question to Southampton and across the Channel was more difficult than to Brest.

After some further discussion as to accommodation at ports etc., it was arranged that further consideration of this problem should take place at 4 P.M. in the office of the French Public Works Ministry.

The American D.G.T. and General Nash should be present at this meeting.

(The meeting was held and it was found that certain improvements in detail could be effected, but that the

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naval quays were unsuitable for the large liners in question.)

### *Second Discussion.*

Sir Wm. Robertson asked General Pershing if he had considered the proposal the Prime Minister has sent to Colonel House for sending over men to be incorporated as battalions with the British brigades. General Pershing said this proposal would involve the breaking up of divisions already organized in America.

General Pershing explained that there are some 45 divisions in America but he thought no one could say how many would be over here by midsummer. The rate of arrival was already behind the scheduled programme. The rate depends on the shipping, and on the railways in France. It had been hoped to have 24 divisions over by the end of June. Now there could probably only be 15 expected as a maximum.

Sir J. Maclay then explained how much easier it was to get men over than stores and equipment.

Sir Wm. Robertson said there was no intention of interfering in any way with the programme for the formation of General Pershing's Army. It was not possible, in any circumstance, to get over the 45 divisions—as divisions—this year, but it was quite possible to get over infantrymen by battalions about five times as quickly as battalions could be brought over in divisions. General Pershing then said that extra shipping was the factor in bringing over extra men.

A similar proposition was to be discussed with the French in the afternoon. Sir Wm. Robertson pointed out that the language question made it impossible to put American battalions into French divisions.

In answer to General Pershing—Sir Wm. Robertson said that the number of men the British could take was anything from 100,000 to 150,000. It might be possible to find British shipping for that number, or at any rate the greater part of it, without in any way interfering with the American divisional programme.

Sir Wm. Robertson then explained the scheme of reducing British divisions from 12 battalions to 9 and using American battalions to bring the divisions up to 12 again, the best number.

General Pershing suggested for consideration leaving the divisions at 9 and forming American divisions to take their place in line.

Sir Wm. Robertson therefore pointed out that this plan was not so rapid as his proposal and he asked General Pershing if he would further consider the battalion scheme—emphasizing the point that the divisions of General Pershing's Army would not be interfered with.

General Pershing said he would think it over.

Sir Wm. Robertson then read the communication sent to Colonel House, and gave General Pershing a copy.

On this General Pershing asked if shipping could be provided by the British for the transport of the men.

Sir J. Maclay explained the scheme for releasing some British shipping from the carriage of food and raw materials temporarily. This shipping could bring over men quickly now, and the shortage of food etc., would be made up later when more shipping would be available.

Sir Wm. Robertson added that the risk involved in this scheme was a very great one—but that the British Government would take the risk if America could see her way to provide the men for the purpose indicated. They could not however well take the risk for the transfer of

complete divisions as not enough men would be brought in this manner to justify the great risks involved.

General Pershing asked if a scheme for sending over individuals as drafts for British battalions would be a sound one. Sir Wm. Robertson said that it would be a great help, but such a scheme was not so good as the battalion scheme. There was also the difficulty of discipline and complete loss of national identity.

General Pershing here asked for it to be understood that this was only a discussion, and that nothing formal was being said at present. He still thought that any extra tonnage available might be devoted to bringing over extra divisions.

Sir Wm. Robertson again repeated (1) battalions can be brought over at about five times the rate of divisions (2) the British Government could not run the risk of going short of food for a scheme to bring over two or three divisions, although they would be prepared to take the risk for the very urgent purpose of getting a large number of infantry into the line within a shorter period than was possible for divisions.

He added that unless something of this kind were done there was the possibility of the British becoming so exhausted and attenuated this summer, in the severe fighting which was undoubtedly coming, that the Entente would have a very heavy task in front of them next year in order to win the war.

The question of the great increase in the number of German divisions on the West front was then discussed. General Pershing pointed out that it required a 20% superiority for the British and French to give the Germans a hard time last year, and suggested that the Ger-



mans would require at least a 20% superiority to do the same to the British and French this year.

Sir Wm. Robertson pointed out the danger of building upon getting a decision next year, as had been done each successive year since 1914. The Germans had been able to cripple one or other of the Allies each year—Russia in 1915, France in 1916, Italy in 1917. In 1918 it might be the British if America could not help in the way suggested.

It was agreed to continue this discussion on Thursday 10th. Before breaking up, Sir J. Maclay wished again to emphasize the point that it was possible to bring over men, in battalions without transport etc., about five times as quickly as organized divisions.

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NOTES OF SECOND MEETING BETWEEN  
GENERAL PERSHING, SIR WM. ROBERTSON, AND  
SIR J. MACLAY, SHIPPING CONTROLLER, ON  
JANUARY 10, 1918.

The progress made at the Meeting in the French Public Works Ministry on the 9th had not been very great. Two berths for big ships at Cherbourg had been provisionally allotted. Sir J. Maclay offered to send a good man over to work with the Americans to develop the unloading service, and suggested the further examination and development of Brest and Cherbourg—and also L'Orient. General Pershing agreed to this.

It was also decided that Colonel Wood, who is going to London, should go to see the Shipping Controller, and take with him all the data about the ships.

In discussing the Southampton scheme General Pershing said that General Bliss was in favour of it, and that

preliminary arrangements to carry it through were already made. Sir Wm. Robertson said there was no objection on our part, but the Brest scheme was much safer, and it was extremely difficult to get naval escort for the cross-Channel trip.

The question of bringing over extra battalions was then discussed. General Pershing said he must put a clear proposal before the U.S. Government. He asked when the American battalions would be released from the British divisions. Sir Wm. Robertson said that it could not be done for some months.

The relation of the present scheme to the training scheme put up by Sir Douglas Haig was next considered, and it was decided that the one need not affect the other.

General Pershing asked if the reduction of British divisions to 9 battalions would not involve a reduction in artillery and so set free artillery to form American divisions straight away. Sir Wm. Robertson pointed out that Artillery was below the proportion in other Armies already, and could not be reduced.

General Pershing pointed out that public opinion in the U.S.A. was all in the direction of keeping American personnel in American formations. He asked however for a memorandum, on which he could base a telegram to his War Department.

It was found that the main point to impress on public opinion was the urgency of the matter. It was agreed to meet again in the afternoon for the purpose of framing the requisite communication to Washington.

There was further discussion regarding the American national point of view. Sir Wm. Robertson admitted the objections but again pointed out the urgency of the matter. He added that if British divisions were Americanized

the change would not take place before midsummer, which would be very awkward, as if the scheme were taken up now it would not materialize for three or four months.

General Pershing then took up the point regarding help to the French. He pointed out that all the original American plans were based on American troops going in with the French. Sir Wm. Robertson said that M. Clemenceau had said he favoured the British scheme and suggested adding something to the telegram to Washington regarding the language difficulty. General Pershing said he must see General Petain again before doing that.

Sir William Robertson said that the Shipping authorities were very anxious that in return for bringing over men now, the Americans would give some help later with cargo.

The outstanding characteristic of the two conferences was the constant repetition by Sir William Robertson of the argument that the British proposal would not interfere with the scheduled formation of the American Army. General Pershing could not apparently be convinced of this and hesitated to lend himself to any project that might endanger its fruition. His observation that, if sufficient tonnage could be released by the British from the carriage of foodstuffs and raw material to transport 100,000 to 150,000 men, the same might be made available to bring over extra divisions, was more effective than naïve. Although seemingly indicative of a lack of appreciation on his part of the risks such sacrifice imposed upon the British, it brought home

the fact that while such extra tonnage could be found for the purpose of Sir William Robertson's plan, not any part of it could possibly be spared to accelerate the readjustment of the schedule of American division arrivals, already badly in arrears.

The plastic participation of Sir J. Maclay affords a rare exhibition of excellent coaching. He entered the conversation always at the right time and with adequate support for Sir William Robertson's contentions. As an Aide-de-Camp his discerning remarks were unerring in appropriateness, as, for example, at the breaking up of the first meeting. Together with Sir William Robertson he interposed obstacles to General Pershing's idea of developing the Southampton-Havre route, though not actually refusing to consider it, and urged the further investigation of the French ports. He even offered to send "a good man" to help in this work and to undertake the improvement of the unloading services at Brest, Cherbourg and L'Orient. It is evident that both he and Sir William Robertson were averse, because of its importance in the practical operation of their own plan, to yielding the Southampton-Havre route.

There was considerable boldness in Sir William Robertson's suggestion that "because of language difficulties," General Pershing dismiss the French request for the amalgamation of American units in their divisions, also much adroitness in harmonizing the scheme of Sir Douglas Haig with the main issue. Lastly there was a psychological pressure exerted on

General Pershing by the reference to the situation at the front, including a résumé of the reverses of the Allies during the past three years, and by the intimation that, if catastrophe befell the British in the summer of 1918, the blame for its non-prevention might be properly charged to the failure of the United States to accept the proposal advanced by the British Government.

Attached to the reports of these meetings was the letter written by Sir William Robertson in compliance with General Pershing's request "for a memorandum, on which he could base a telegram to his War Department":—

GENERAL J. J. PERSHING,

Commanding American Army in France.

In accordance with your wishes I forward this memorandum explanatory of the request of the British Government that you will consider the question of supplying some American battalions for temporary employment with British infantry brigades. We have verbally discussed the matter at some length during the last two days and as you are aware the present request is the same as that made to Colonel House by Mr. Lloyd George on 2nd December last, except that it now refers to battalions only and not, as previously, to companies or battalions.

It is obvious that Germany may be expected to strive her utmost, if not to win outright to place herself at any rate in a winning position during the next seven or eight months. Russia's defection enables her greatly to strengthen her forces on the West or Italian front or on both, and for the last three months German divisions



have been coming over as quickly as they can be transported. Italy is still weak and will probably continue to require British and French assistance. The man-power of France is rapidly diminishing. The British divisions are being reduced from 12 to 9 battalions because of the shortage of men and it will be difficult for us to maintain at strength even the 9-battalion division throughout the year. There are already 28 more German divisions on the West front than a year ago; there are fewer British and French divisions (gone to Italy), making a net gain to Germany of 39 divisions; she can easily bring over 40 more divisions by May, as well as a large number of heavy guns; and as shown above, the British division will in future have 25% less infantry in them than in 1917. The situation is therefore becoming very serious, and it is with considerable anxiety that the British and French authorities look forward to the summer, because even if we hold up the German attack, as we hope to do, our divisions may become so attenuated and exhausted in the process as to be fit for little employment afterwards. In other words, if France and England do not receive substantial American military assistance before the summer, the assistance America is now preparing may come too late to admit of the Entente securing the kind of peace for which they are fighting.

I understand that you cannot give any definite opinion regarding the amount of your assistance, owing to the uncertainty as to shipping and other things, but that the arrival of 15 divisions by the end of June is the most you hope for, while of course several of these divisions will not be ready to fight for some months later. In view of probable developments this forecast is, in my opinion, much too small to ensure the hostile attack being ade-



quately met. For this reason the British Government earnestly hope that serious consideration will be given by you to their request for help.

The main difficulty in making your help available lies in sea-transport, and from this point of view it is clear that to bring from America a given number of men with all necessary equipment, horses, etc., as complete divisions means an infinitely greater shipping effort than to bring the same number of men as battalions, and without transport of any kind—which could be found by us. Having regard to the general critical situation and to the shortage of our man-power, my Government is prepared in order to secure infantry reinforcements immediately, to run very considerable risks in the reduction of our present stocks of food and war material, in the hope that later on the American commercial fleet as it gradually increases may be able to give compensation for cargo shut out by the carriage of reinforcements. All could be done without in any way interfering now or in the future with the transport for the American Army as at present arranged, and it is estimated that 150,000 additional men (or 150 battalions) could be brought over within three or four months of the time it is decided to permit of their employment in the manner indicated. Whether the battalions would be brought to England or France for training, is a matter, with several others, which can be settled later. They would be trained, in any case, under your officers, of course. After being used by battalions in brigades for a sufficient time to become efficient they could, if you so desired, be used as brigades in British divisions under their own Brigadiers, and later on, if and when required by you, the brigades could be recalled from the British divisions and go to form American divisions. Everything

possible would be done to meet your wishes in this and all other respects, although you will I am sure understand that it would not serve any very useful purpose to put these American units into British formations unless they could remain for a reasonable period of time—say four or five months.

The great difficulty which confronts you in acceding to the above request is the very natural one of national sentiment and the desire to retain national identity. This is fully appreciated by the British Government, who feel that if America can accept the proposal she will thereby display the greatest possible magnanimity and sacrifice. It is, however, a matter of national sentiment on the one hand, and on the other of Germany establishing herself in a winning position if your assistance does not arrive in time.

I understand that you have some 45 divisions in course of formation, and that to find the battalions I have ventured to suggest you would have to break into these divisions. But it is practically certain that at least 15 of the 45 cannot reach France this year, and therefore they will be idle till 1919—if the war lasts as long. Further, may I say that we, when raising our New Armies, were compelled to break up two of these Armies to send the battalions as such to France. Had we not done so we could not have held our own in 1915.

You have made two alternative suggestions:—

- (a) For us to bring over divisions in place of battalions.
- (b) To withdraw all our infantry from a certain number of divisions and replace them with your battalions.

I have already dealt with (a) in discussing transport, and the two or three extra divisions which the available tonnage would bring would not, I feel sure, be deemed by my Government sufficient justification for the risks incurred in providing the tonnage.

With respect to (b) the effect would be still to leave the divisions partly American and partly British; the change would involve the divisions being out of action for several weeks; and it would have to be made probably at the most critical period of the year. In fact I do not think it would be possible to attempt making it at the time.

I trust that the above explanation makes everything clear, and I am sure that in the general interest you will give it careful attention. As you are aware the French Prime Minister feels equally with the British Government the inestimable value of the proposal, and has no desire whatever to raise difficulties in regard to its application to the French Army as well as to the British Army. His only wish is that you should do all you can to help either the French or the British.

Paris.

January 10, 1918. (Sgd.) W. R. ROBERTSON, GENERAL  
C.I.G.S.

The stenographic notes of the two meetings, though filed in the British War Office, were not, in all probability, presented to the War Cabinet. Instead a memorandum, prepared by Sir William Robertson, giving his version of the discussions as well as his estimate of the situation from the standpoint of American participation, was passed to the Cabinet members:

## AMERICAN BATTALIONS FOR BRITISH DIVISIONS

The War Cabinet will wish to know the result of my interview with General Pershing. Apparently he had never seriously considered the proposal sent to Colonel House by the Prime Minister, although Colonel House has shown him the memorandum on the subject. The fact is, he does not like the proposal because, (a) he is anxious to bring over his divisions as such; (b) he naturally prefers to preserve national identity and argues, quite rightly, that American battalions cannot be expected to do as well in British as in American divisions. The result of the interview was that he will forward our proposal to his Government, giving it a mild form of support and telegraphing me a copy of the communication he sends. I hope to receive this in two or three days time. He wished to defer the despatch of the telegram to Washington until he had seen General Petain yesterday, as the French had made to him a proposal similar to ours. As to this, M. Clemenceau told me that he had no personal feelings in the matter, and was quite prepared to see the Americans come to us if they would but come to somebody. I have reason to think that General Petain will take the same line.

General Pershing pressed, as I knew he would, for us to use any additional tonnage we can spare for the transport of American divisions instead of infantry reinforcements for our own divisions, and I had repeatedly to remind him that whereas the tonnage we can find will bring over some 150,000 to 200,000 infantry (say 150 battalions) who can be fighting in three or four months, it cannot bring over more than about three divisions (36 battalions), who will not be fighting for at least six months. Eventually he admitted the force of this argument. I added that the British Government could not, for

the sake of these three divisions, run the great risks incurred in cutting down our stocks of food and war material in order to provide the special tonnage, though they would do so for the sake of the infantry reinforcements.

He made another alternative proposal—that instead of putting American battalions into our brigades we should take out all infantry from a certain number of our divisions, and he would put into the latter entirely American infantry. To this I replied that as the change would probably have to be made in the early summer it might not be feasible as we may expect to be fighting hard then; that the change would mean that the divisions concerned would be out of action several weeks, that is while the newly constructed divisions are settling down, and that the divisions would still remain partly American and partly British. He finally gave up this proposal also.

I impressed upon him the vital necessity of getting additional men over, or American assistance might arrive too late. I ascertained that there are 45 divisions in course of formation, of which four and a bit are now in France. He is very averse from breaking up any of these 45, and also said they contain all battalions at present raised. I asked how many divisions he could bring to France by midsummer. He replied that no one in the world could even guess, as it depends upon the amount of shipping, rate of turning round ships (which appear to be very slow) equipment, etc., etc. On being further pressed he said that he hoped, as a maximum, for 15 divisions by the end of June. How many by the end of the year he declined to estimate, but he agreed that the total would not exceed 30, thus leaving 15 in America. I pointed out the danger and the uselessness of these 15 remaining idle



till 1919, and told him that we, in forming our New Armies, had had to break up two out of six in order to send such battalions, as such, to France in 1915, without which we could not have held our own as we did.

Finally, he said his chief objection was that of national sentiment, and to that I could give no reply except that while we fully appreciated the American point of view, it was a question of sentiment versus the possibility of our divisions becoming so exhausted and attenuated by this year's fighting as to be of comparatively little use afterwards, in which case it might be difficult for the Entente to win the war in the way they must win it if their aims are to be realized. He admitted all this and said that but for American feeling—which is very strong—to keep their men together and to produce a big Army of their own, he would not hesitate to accept our proposal, but that in the circumstances he could not take the responsibility and must refer to Washington, notwithstanding the telegram he had already received.

I have never been very sanguine as to American assistance in any form this year, and I must tell the War Cabinet that I have returned still less sanguine. The raising of new armies is a tremendous task for any country, and although one might expect that America, with her two previous experiences, and her supposed great business and hustling qualities, would do better than other countries, the fact is she is doing very badly. She had, of course, very little to work upon in the way of cadres and officers; she has never made any real study of war organization; and there is no adequate decentralization. The French have lost all patience and their relations with the Americans are the reverse of good. The French are always much too optimistic in such matters,



but they may well be excused for being dissatisfied in the present case. The Americans are proceeding as if they had years in which to prepare. They have laid out cantonment areas for 10 divisions and are building the most luxurious huts to supplement billets; each man has a bed and three blankets; there are no fewer than 300 officers and 750 typists at their G.H.Q.; they have as yet little or no rolling stock in the country (though they were to supply their own) and are using ours which we want for ourselves and for Italy; they appear to have omitted to take the most elementary steps to speed up disembarkation at Brest where the big liners go; and General Pershing tells me that ships are sometimes laid up for days in American ports for want of coal. He, himself, is charged with all matters connected with the Army in France, such as contracts for aircraft, provision of munitions, sea-transport, etc., etc., and is thus unable properly to command and train his troops. In fact he is doing in France all the work done by all our different departments in London, with the exception of Finance and Foreign Office work. There ought to be in France American representatives, other than him, to deal with questions of administration and supply, thus leaving him free to train and fight his troops. I suggested this to him and he quite agreed, and told me that he hopes to "shove off" some of his work on to General Bliss who is being sent to Versailles (as an excuse, I understand, for moving him out of his present appointment). General Pershing is looking older and rather tired, and I doubt if he has yet an intelligent and considered view of the nature of his task, or how to set about it.

My general impression is that America's power to help us to win the war—that is to help us to defeat the Ger-

mans in battle—is a very weak reed to lean upon at present, and will continue to be so for a very long time to come unless she follows up her words with actions much more practical and energetic than any she has yet taken.

January 12, 1918.

(Sgd.) W. R. ROBERTSON.

C.I.G.S.

The report of Sir William Robertson, though pessimistic in tenor as to the actual assistance to be expected from the United States in the prosecution of the war during 1918, was singularly searching in its analysis of the existing evils that were impeding "America's" more rapid participation. His conclusions might, at times, have been colored to some degree by the failure of the United States to reach a standard of activity that his own individual determination deemed satisfactory. Perhaps too his reasoning was subconsciously affected by the annoying irksomeness of General Pershing to accede to the proposal which his judgement conceived as essential in reestablishing the material advantage that had been anticipated at the entry of America into the war nearly a year before. Then again he did not seem to display thorough understanding of the basic cause for America's deficiency, other than an admission that America "had very little to work upon in the way of cadres and officers," although the consideration of the cause of the deficiency had long since ceased, in this particular case, to have any value in determining the remedy to be applied. On

the whole, however, his straightforward indictment of a national weakness—lack of preparedness—finds us guilty again, and we must honestly admit it, of that characteristic stubbornness, which our earlier wars had proven successively to be true bills, in our repeated refusal to adopt an adequate military policy.

It was true that no real study of war organization, especially from the standpoint of staff manipulation, had ever been attempted to any extent in our military circles prior to the war. There may have been limited speculation in staff theory indulged in occasionally at the War College in Washington, but in the Army School of the Line at Fort Leavenworth, the subject of tactics had dominated almost to the exclusion of logistics. Insofar as his criticism of “adequate decentralization” was concerned, Sir Wm. Robertson seems to have been guilty of the error so commonly existent in the conception of organization that prevails amongst our own military hierarchy. There was actually too great decentralization and the result, that inevitably follows upon the loose relationship of interdependent activities in any organizational scheme, was a high degree of centralization. The allusion to the elaborateness and effeteness of the cantonment preparations is an expressive commentary that should bring home to the American people, though it never will, the hollowness of local patriotism advertised by self-seeking politicians and carpet-baggers, at the expense of national progress and economy.

The virtual reproduction of our War Department

at the American General Headquarters in France was really a necessity, not only because of the great distance of the American forces from their own Government, but also because of the diversified issues that were forced upon it. While it may have been overstaffed, a proclivity delightfully exercised in all American Governmental organization, nevertheless its functions could never have been confined, as in the cases of the French and British, to those solely appropriate to the General Headquarters of Armies or Groups of Armies in the Field.

A general comprehension of all these matters, particularly of the political situation in the United States, must have existed to some extent in the midst of the British War Cabinet. In fairness to Sir William Robertson, it must be said, that he supplemented his written report with a verbal comment before the War Cabinet which removed any criticism of indecisiveness on General Pershing's part for not taking the responsibility, in the circumstances, of accepting or rejecting the proposal and for insisting on referring it again to Washington, "notwithstanding the telegram he had already received." The Chief of the Imperial General Staff accomplished this by emphasizing plainly that "responsibility of a political character was being thrown on to him (General Pershing) by the President by leaving the question of American incorporation in British divisions to him."

The reception of Sir William Robertson's report

by the War Cabinet is covered in an Extract (Minute 9, War Cabinet 321) from the Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing street, S.W., on January 14, 1918:—

9. With reference to War Cabinet 319, Minute 3, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Paper G.T.-3327) regarding his recent interview in France with General Pershing on the subject of the suggested use of American battalions with British divisions.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the Shipping Controller had accompanied him to France, and that he had definitely ascertained that the best use was not now being made by the Americans of French ports. He instanced the fact that some of the ships sent to Brest were not suitably loaded. An American shipping expert was coming to London that day to go into the various problems with the Ministry of Shipping. He (General Robertson) added that we could make arrangements for the landing of some American troops at Southampton, and for the transportation of these troops across the channel in smaller vessels. The question of Admiralty escorts for this purpose, however, presented a serious difficulty. He admitted that his report presented a somewhat gloomy account of the present state of things, but feared it was accurate. General Pershing was overworked, and responsibility of a political character was being thrown on to him by the President, by leaving the question of American incorporation in British divisions to him. He was glad to report that both M. Clemenceau and General Petain took a reasonable and helpful line. M. Clemenceau realized the language difficulty in incor-



porating American battalions in the French Army. He gathered that M. Clemenceau would welcome our suggestion, provided it led to an increase in the amount of American assistance rendered available on the Western front.

Mr. Balfour reported a private conversation he had had with Admiral Sims, who shared the views taken by the British authorities. He added that he was of opinion that it was most important to get American troops sent to British ports and so to France.

Lord Reading stated that he had received a letter written by Mr. Mackay, giving an even gloomier statement, with regard to the prospects of American shipbuilding, than that submitted by our representative, Sir Thomas Royden. The difficulty appeared to be that there was no system of delegating authority at Washington, and everything had to be referred to the White House for decision. Ex-President Roosevelt was daily attacking the Government for their delays in settling vital matters. In regard to the "Liberty" engine for aeroplanes, tests already made before Lord Reading left America were favorable, but these were not so severe as those practiced in our service.

General Smuts pointed out that the only satisfactory test would be a long-distance flight. With regard to the incorporation of American troops in British divisions, he thought that the President desired to be fortified, in making his decision, by a recommendation from his Military Advisers.

Lord Robert Cecil added that it was impossible to overestimate the harm done in America by Lord Northcliffe's letter, which drew an unfavorable and inaccurate contrast between American powers of organization and British.



Lord Derby stated that if American troops could be sent to this country, it would be possible for us to clothe, equip, and arm at least 150,000.

Lord Reading added that sooner or later he thought that President Wilson must be guided by the English view. The difficulty was that every American Mission sent to this country became very strongly anglicised. Admiral Sims was an instance in point. The President still hesitated to submit their advice to the American public, as American sentiment was so strongly in favor of separate national organization.

The War Cabinet decided that the Prime Minister should send a *personal* message to the President, through Colonel House, again urging our proposals regarding the suggested incorporation of American troops into British divisions, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to provide the Prime Minister with the necessary material for the telegram.

In accordance with these instructions, Sir William Robertson prepared the draft of a telegram to be sent by the Prime Minister to Colonel House:

*(Given to Prime Minister personally. W. R. R., 15/1.)*

DRAFT TELEGRAM FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO COLONEL HOUSE.

vide W.C. 321/9.

With reference to the proposal I sent to you through Lord Reading for employing American companies or battalions in British formations, as time presses and no decision has yet been reached, I sent Sir W. Robertson last week to see General Pershing. Latter says he can-

## 68     IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST!

not himself decide but must refer to Washington. As you know, Lord Reading starts shortly and is bringing over full particulars of my proposal. I hope that if it cannot be accepted now it will not be rejected till he has been heard.

Briefly situation is, that Germans are bringing over divisions from Russia as fast as they can, and strain upon us in assisting France and supporting Italy during the next six months will be such as to cause us grave anxiety, more particularly as we are coming to the end of our resources in man-power. Any additional assistance which America can give during that period will be invaluable. We have examined the question of sea-transport carefully and find that by making temporary sacrifices in our food imports we could bring over about 150,000 American infantry, that is 150 battalions, during the next three or four months, without in any way interfering with present arrangements for bringing over American divisions. We can arrange to feed these battalions, to supply all additional equipment, and to provide necessary training facilities. If these battalions were temporarily incorporated in British formations it would give us invaluable aid during the next critical six months. Later in the year they could, if desired, be withdrawn and incorporated in American divisions.

If the above amount of shipping were allotted to bringing American divisions with full equipment over, not more than three could be brought, and further the time required to train divisions for the field is much longer than for companies or battalions. My Government does not feel justified in asking our people to bear the great additional sacrifices which diversion of shipping will entail for the sake of the assistance of three divisions at a distant date.

Pershing put forward an alternative, namely that we should make good our shortage of men by withdrawing all British battalions from a certain number of our divisions and replacing them with American battalions, but this would put these divisions out of action for the long time necessary to train your infantry to work in co-operation with our guns, engineers, etc., and the military situation would not admit of this.

I trust President will give earnest consideration to my proposal, as it appears to me vital to our cause that America should make herself effectively felt during the first half of this year. M. Clemenceau informed Robertson that he quite understands that language is a difficulty regarding the incorporation of American battalions with French formations and that he had no desire to press for it but hoped that the British proposal would be accepted.

15/1/18.

## VI

During the middle of January 1918, General Wagstaff, the Chief of the British Mission at our G.H.Q., sent two communications to his superiors which are interesting not only because of the emphatic disapproval provoked in the British War Office by the unique suggestion advanced in the one, but also because of the estimate of the characteristics of the American troops contained in the other.

The first communication, a letter, dated January 13, 1918, was written to General Wigham at the British G.H.Q., who, in addition to being General Wagstaff's immediate Chief, seems also to have been

an intimate friend.<sup>1</sup> It is couched in a personal vein, although dealing entirely with the American problem. Whilst a private communication, General Wagstaff authorized General Wigham to forward it to the Military Operation Section of the British General Staff in London, if deemed worth while. It thus found its way to the official files of the British War Office.

In the main the letter is devoted to an analysis of the "Notes" of the meeting between Sir William Robertson and General Pershing in Paris on January 9 and 10, 1918. A copy of these had evidently been furnished General Wagstaff by our G.H.Q. at Chaumont. He points out at once the difference between Sir William Robertson's proposal and Sir Douglas Haig's "scheme," adding that he does not know to what extent the latter depends upon British shipping. But he concludes tersely that the "C.I. G.S. (Sir William Robertson) will not lend the British ships unless the men are sent in Battalions and not by divisions." His idea, "if he were asked," is to combine the two schemes; pool all available shipping and bring all the men possible, by divisions, or "nominally so," to Southampton, Brest, and every port that may provide berths; get the men concentrated "in lumps" in France and then use them when and how "liked." He remarks that public opinion "would never sanction the troops coming near the British unless they leave America as divi-

<sup>1</sup> The complete letter, with official comments, will be found in Appendix No. 6.

sions." Having got the men over he believes it will be an easy matter to use them in any way suitable and "probably the best way would be to put infantry battalions into our divisions, use artillerymen as artillery or infantry drafts and engineers as infantry drafts." There was no half-way compromise in his mind; get them over first and then use them all, infantry, artillery and engineers, as drafts for the British divisions. Nevertheless he cautions: "This must all be done as camouflage. When the men are here, invent the emergency, and use the men. But do not publish a scheme beforehand, such as reducing our divisions and bringing them up with Americans. You can do that at the time but do not say so now." He comments assuringly in regard to the American troops that "they will not mind if the camouflage commanders and staff are done away with on arrival and Britishers take charge."

In London, however, his suggestions met with distinct coldness. Colonel Kirke, the Deputy Director of the Military Operations Section of the General Staff, endorsed the letter as follows:

Annexed is a private and personal letter for our confidential information. The views put forward are Wagstaff's surmises, which may or may not be correct.

I suggest it would pay us better to be perfectly straightforward than to juggle with the facts as Wagstaff suggests.

The second communication, a telegram, dated January 12, 1918, was a reply by General Wagstaff to certain questions asked by the Director of Mili-

tary Operations regarding the type, calibre, suitability for British ammunition, etc., of American weapons and the general standard of the American soldiers, especially those newly inducted into the service. On the latter subject he states: "Americans have higher standard of comfort, more impetuosity, more individuality, but are less able to stand hardships or hammering. This is difficult to define as no one can tell what will be the characteristics of the new troops. Old soldiers very few but much like ours. Probably new soldiers resemble Canadians."

The telegram concludes with a significant paragraph: "On January 19th 1st American Division goes into line near St. Mihiel on one brigade front under French Division. It is intended that other American divisions should be put in line and take over corps sector in that region. It is probable that proposals for incorporation of American units in French divisions will not mature."

This last information was conveyed by the Secretary of State for War to the War Cabinet (Minute 4, War Cabinet 323), at its meeting held at 10 Downing Street on January 16, 1918.

## VII

Sir William Robertson reported to the War Cabinet on January 16th, that he had received a telegram from General Pershing which stated the American Commander-in-Chief had recommended serious consideration by the United States of the proposal of the British for incorporating American



battalions in British divisions, but that, if adopted, it should only be carried out under certain conditions. General Pershing further requested to be supplied with data, for the information of his Government, as to "the strength of the British Armies," and "the resources of the man-power of the British Empire." The War Cabinet directed the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to furnish this data, and to point out, in so doing, that "the total of the British armed forces amounted to no less than 1 in 8, or 1 in 9 of the population." He was also instructed "to include in his figures the number of men in the Navy; to make a reference to our efforts in regard to the additional burdens imposed upon us by maintaining nearly the whole of the maritime transport of our European Allies; and to draw attention to the great industrial effort which was being made by Great Britain" (War Cabinet 323, Minute 3).

Accordingly Sir William Robertson wrote to General Pershing as follows:—

(O.I/135/388).

From: GENERAL SIR W. ROBERTSON, War Office

To: GENERAL WAGSTAFF, for

GENERAL J. J. PERSHING,

Commanding American Army in France.

Despatched 9:30 P.M., 16.1.1918.

No. 50246, cypher.

1. I presented your telegram of January 15th to British War Cabinet and they are quite prepared to agree to the eight conditions you mention in paragraph 1.

2. Regarding paragraph 2 there is nothing in the proposal I have made to you with respect to the American battalions which will interfere with the arrangements you have made with Sir Douglas Haig for the training and supply of American troops in France.

3. Reference paragraph 3 the position as regards manpower is that the United Kingdom and its Dependencies have raised and maintained for its armed forces 7,500,000 men, of these over four million are today on the strength of the armies.

4. The British Government has given the most anxious consideration to the question of the maintenance of the Armies in the Field during 1918 and by making every effort there will become available for service at the front 449,000 men now under training plus 100,000 men to be called up. There will be called up in addition 100,000 men of lower category who are not fit for the front line plus 120,000 lads of 18 years of age who will not be available for service at the front until 1919. Kindly keep these figures strictly secret.

5. I would remind you that we maintain a great Navy which absorbs 400,000 men and that the greater part of sea transportation and coal production for the Entente countries in Europe also fall upon us and we must moreover keep up large industries for the general benefit of the Entente. Notwithstanding these great demands outside the needs of the Army, Great Britain has during the war put into the Armed Forces of the Crown roughly one in eight of the total population.

Supplementing this letter, Sir William Robertson had another interview with General Pershing on January 25th. In the interim the War Cabinet,

meeting on January 22nd, again agreed that "a private message from the Prime Minister to the President of the United States would be opportune on the subject of despatching American troops by battalions." (War Cabinet 328, Minute 3.) This opinion was merely a reiteration of the understanding arrived at in its meeting of January 14th, (War Cabinet 321, Minute 9). The Prime Minister had been supplied with the "draft telegram" of Sir William Robertsons but had not as yet forwarded the message to Washington. As a result of this later Cabinet meeting it was decided that the Prime Minister, in forwarding the telegram, should incorporate a specific appeal to the President "to adopt the British view of the form in which America could best assist the Allied Cause."

At the meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on January 25, 1918 (War Cabinet 331, Minute 3), extracts from a French Report concerning the state of the American Army were read. The questions evoked by the reading of the extracts are illuminating in that they indicate the action of General Pershing, in recommending "serious consideration" by the United States of the British proposal for incorporating 150 battalions (150,000 men), had come to be regarded as a "promise" of fulfillment on his part:—

3. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 3, the Director of Military Operations read extracts from a

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French Report concerning the state of the American Army.<sup>1</sup> It was expected that there would be 8 divisions in France in March, 14 in June, and 20 in September 1918 and 28 in January 1919, but these divisions would require six months' training in France before they would be fit to take an active part in operations. Hence, by July only 4 trained divisions could be counted on, and by October only 8, with perhaps 4 half-trained divisions fit for a quiet sector. At the present moment there was one efficient division, and a second was now about to receive its first trench training.

It was asked whether these figures were independent of the 150,000 lately promised. The answer was in the affirmative.

It was also asked whether these 150,000 men would be as slow to become efficient as the divisions referred to in the French report.

The Director of Military Operations pointed out that the battalions could be trained in one sixth of the time required for the training of a division. If the transport of these troops began at once, we should have some of these battalions in the line in May.

The Secretary of State for War expressed a fear that the tonnage available for the transport of these troops was going to be cut down. He also adverted to the very backward state of the training of the American infantry.

<sup>1</sup> For the full French Report see Appendix No. 7. It is interesting to compare this Report with the "Summary of French Notes on the American Army" (see Appendix No. 4), prepared by the French General Staff at the beginning of 1918; also to note that the French Commander-in-Chief "bases his plan of operation on the decisive co-operation of the American Army in 1919."

On January 31st, at a meeting of the War Cabinet, the Director of Military Operations read extracts from a letter of General Wagstaff's in which it was stated "that there was great enthusiasm among American divisions about to go into the line, and also much satisfaction had been expressed by the American troops when they heard of the possibility of their battalions being incorporated in British formations." It further stated that the latter proposal "had been well received by the American people."

The exact purpose of General Wagstaff in so writing is difficult to understand, unless it was actuated by the not uncommon tendency of some subordinates to cater to their superior's inclinations. Of course the "American troops" knew little or nothing at all of these matters other than the occasional rumors of their future destination for "trench training" that arose in their midst. Their desire to get into the line was real and there may have been some feeling of "satisfaction" expressed by some of the higher officers upon learning that the initial "tour of trench duty" of their organizations was to be carried out with British, *rather than with French*, divisions. But that they were aware of any plan to "incorporate" themselves or fellow-soldiers as an integral part of British divisions, much less that they contemplated such inclusion with "satisfaction," is an absurd statement. Equally far-fetched, whatever the source of General Wagstaff's information, was

the statement in regard to the American people's acceptance of the proposal; for it was still under tentative consideration only by the United States Government.

In the meantime Sir William Robertson, who had gone to Paris, interviewed General Pershing again on January 25th. Following this conference there occurred, on January 30th, an important meeting at Versailles to discuss the co-operation of the United States troops with the British Army. There were present Generals Pershing and Bliss, on behalf of the United States, and the Prime Minister, General Sir William Robertson, Lord Milner, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and Sir Maurice Hankey,<sup>1</sup> for the British Government. A "final" agreement was reached between Mr. Lloyd George and General Pershing, though hardly along the lines that had been so persistently urged by Sir William Robertson. The account of the Versailles meeting and its results are described in an exchange of letters between Sir William Robertson and General Pershing on the subject. Sir William Robertson wrote:—

PARIS,  
30th January, 1918.

MY DEAR GENERAL:—

With reference to the question of the temporary employment, as an emergency measure, of American bat-

<sup>1</sup> Sir Maurice Hankey was the head of the British Board of Trade.



talions with British divisions, Mr. Lloyd George has asked me to restate the case so as to remove any misapprehension which may exist.

1. We are very desirous, owing to the constant arrival of heavy reinforcements on the West Front and to the shortage of men in the British and French Armies, to obtain, temporarily, the assistance of American infantry. We are prepared to provide the tonnage required to carry, approximately, 150,000 men with their personal baggage, but without transport. To provide this tonnage we shall incur considerable risk as we must greatly reduce our present stock of food and war material. We hope therefore (though we do not ask for this to be an essential condition) that later on the American commercial fleet as it gradually increases may be able to give compensation for cargo shut out by the conveyance of the men in question.

2. We will continue to provide the same tonnage as hitherto for the transport of American divisions, namely a monthly average of about 12,000 men. You will remember that Mr. Foley stated on the 25th instant that it is not possible for us to provide tonnage other than that for the 150,000 men (approximately) and the 12,000 per month.

3. I gather from what you said to Mr. Lloyd George yesterday and at our interview on the 25th instant, that for various military and political reasons you do not approve of the 150,000 men we can transport being exclusively infantry and of their being employed with British divisions under the conditions specified in paragraph 1 of your telegram to me dated 14th instant.

4. I understand, however, that in order to meet what

may be a serious situation you would agree to the following:—

(a) American battalions to be brought over and trained with British divisions provided that we also bring over the remainder of the personnel of the divisions from which the battalions are taken.

(b) Thus the 150,000 men for whom we can provide tonnage should consist of the personnel of six American divisions, namely about 90,000 infantry (72 battalions) and 60,000 to 70,000 men of other arms and services.

(c) The conveyance of all parts of the divisions, other than personnel would be undertaken by you.

(d) The infantry on arrival in France, would join our divisions for training, while the other men would be retained by you for training.

(e) When training has been completed, and when you have assembled the guns, transport, etc., etc., of the divisions, the battalions temporarily placed with our divisions would be recalled at your discretion in order that the divisions could be formed as such, and come directly and completely under your orders.

5. I should be glad if you kindly say whether the above correctly represents your wishes, and whether you feel you can recommend to your Government that it should be carried out.

6. I may add that we could provide land transport for the American infantry under training with our divisions until such time as you would wish to provide it. We could also arrange to provide food and other supplies you might wish. These and various other administrative details could later be arranged by you in communication with Sir

Douglas Haig, who would do all in his power to meet your wishes.

Yours sincerely  
(Sgd.) W. R. ROBERTSON.

GENERAL J. J. PERSHING,  
Commanding American Forces in France.

To this letter General Pershing replied:

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES  
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

January 31st, 1918.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON,  
British Army,  
Paris.

MY DEAR GENERAL ROBERTSON:

With reference to your letter of the 30th instant, I am sending for your information a copy of the memorandum agreed to yesterday which will, of course, form the basis for handling the personnel of the American divisions to be brought over in British tonnage.

1. It is noted that you propose to provide tonnage to carry over the personnel of six American divisions (approximately 150,000 men) with their personal baggage, but without transport.

2. It will be observed that, as stated in the memorandum, the transportation of these American divisions is to be conducted without interfering with the present arrangements for bringing over American troops through England or otherwise.

3. The conveyance of the material not furnished in

France by the British or the French necessary to equip these divisions would be undertaken by us.

4. Arrangements will be made, after full discussion, as to the details of American training of American infantry with British divisions, while the Artillery will be trained under our present arrangements.

5. When the training of these divisions had been completed, the infantry to be trained with British divisions will be recalled and the division formed as such directly and completely under American command for service.

6. It is noted that you propose to provide land transport for the American infantry until such time as we can provide it. It is also requested that you provide food and other supplies as may be needed.

7. The arrangements for details of training can only be completed after consultation and conference on the subject between Sir Douglas Haig and myself or our representatives.

Very sincerely,

(Sgd.) JOHN J. PERSHING,  
General U. S. Army.

P. S. I have cabled Washington the substance of the enclosed memorandum with my recommendation that it be approved.

J. J. P.

The "enclosed memorandum" was the agreement, signed by General Pershing on January 28th, and subsequently presented by him to Mr. Lloyd George and signed by the latter on January 30th. Sir William Robertson had not been present at the

signing of this agreement on January 30th and was probably not familiar, therefore, with its exact contents, at the time he wrote his letter of the same date to General Pershing. The "signed" agreement was as follows:—

#### MEMORANDUM

A.—This memorandum refers to the request made by General Sir William Robertson, representing the British War Office, that the American Government send by British shipping to France 150 battalions of infantry for service in British Divisions on the Western Front.

Replying to this proposal, the following objections appear:

1. The national sentiment in the United States against service under a foreign flag.

2. The probability that such action by the United States would excite serious political opposition to the administration in the conduct of the war.

3. The certainty of its being used by German propagandists to stir up public opinion against the war.

4. It would dissipate the direction and effort of the American Army.

5. Differences in national characteristics and military training of troops and consequent failure of complete co-operation would undoubtedly lead to friction and eventual misunderstanding between the two countries.

6. Additional man-power on the Western front could be provided as quickly by some plan not involving amalgamation.

B.—In order to meet the situation, as presented by General Sir William Robertson, and hasten the arrival

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and training of American troops, it is therefore proposed that the British Government use the available sea transportation in question for bringing over the personnel of entire American divisions under the following conditions:

1. That the infantry and auxiliary troops of these divisions be trained with the British divisions by battalions, or under such plan as may be agreed upon.

2. That the artillery be trained under American direction in the use of French material as at present.

3. That the higher commanders and staff officers be assigned for training and experience with corresponding units of the British Army.

4. That when sufficiently trained, these battalions be reformed into regiments and that when the artillery is fully trained, all the units comprising each division be united under their own officers for service.

5. That the above plan be carried out without interfering with the plans now in operation for bringing over American forces.

6. That question of supply be arranged by agreement between the British and American Commanders-in-Chief.

7. That question of arms and equipment be settled in similar manner.

The terms of this "agreement" and the mode of its presentation indicated that General Pershing had a far more "intelligent and considered view of the nature of his task" and "how to set about it," than Sir William Robertson had given him credit for when reporting the results of the Paris conferences of January 9th and 10th to the War Cabinet. In its opening paragraph all doubt is removed as to General Pershing's understanding from the start



that the proposal was the "brain-child" of Sir William Robertson, the representative of the "British War Office" rather than of the British Government. Realizing, as he must have, however, that Sir William Robertson was acting with the cognizance of the War Cabinet, and fully conscious that pressure was being brought to bear upon the United States Government through semi-diplomatic channels, General Pershing moved with admirable caution and deliberateness through the tense perplexities without openly antagonizing the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and yet without yielding any basic concession from his original determination. With the signing of the agreement he began "to have his way." Its provisos were so closely akin to the spirit of the Montreuil meeting,—the outcome of which Sir William Robertson had described as a scheme for "accelerating the formation of General Pershing's Army"—that there could be no objection on the part of the British Commander-in-Chief whom he had been directed by Mr. Baker's telegram "to consult." Yet they coincided with his conception of his mission and contained the essential impetus for the retarded progress of the A.E.F., including the important development of staff and commanders for higher commands.

When, therefore, he was officially approached by the Prime Minister, as the representative of the British Government he was quite prepared, in accordance with his instructions from the United States, to make the decision.

The agreement was approved by the War Cabinet at its meeting held at 10 Downing Street, on February 4, 1918 (War Cabinet 338, Minute 1). The record of the Meeting shows how successfully General Pershing had progressed in striving for the attainment of his objective:—

1. With reference to War Cabinet 331, Minute 3, the Prime Minister reported that an important meeting had taken place at Versailles on the 30th January 1918, on the subject of the co-operation of the United States troops with the British Army. This meeting had been attended by Generals Bliss and Pershing, on behalf of the United States, and by himself, Lord Milner, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, General Sir William Robertson and Sir Maurice Hankey. The Prime Minister explained to the Cabinet the reluctance with which General Pershing viewed the inclusion of American battalions in British divisions for political reasons. It was found, however, that General Pershing raised no objection to American troops being used with the British troops in training, and, since the best way of training troops would be by putting them in the line, we could rest assured that a large number of American infantrymen would be available for purposes of co-operation; in fact, there was no limit as to numbers other than the limit imposed by the amount of shipping available and the rate at which we could equip the American divisions with material. General Pershing had stipulated that not only the infantry, but the whole fighting personnel of divisions should be brought over.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained that the effect of this would be that, out of 150,000 men brought over there would be 90,000 men available as



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**FIELD MARSHAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG**

Greets the French Prime Minister and General Foch at the Amiens Railroad Station. At the meeting were (left to right): Lord Derby, Marshal Foch, Field Marshal Haig, General Mordacq, Premier Clemenceau, General Weygand and General Rawlinson.



infantry for the American battalions in the British brigades.

The War Cabinet approved the final agreement made with General Pershing (Appendix).<sup>1</sup>

### VIII

On February 18th, General Wagstaff wrote to London that he was unable to send a "strength report" of the American forces for the "fortnight." He pointed out that the French had been asking for such an amount of statistical information as to make themselves a nuisance. As a result the Americans had finally notified them that the information would only be supplied in exchange for identical data forthcoming regarding the French Army. "In order to appear consistent," he continued, "they (the Americans) gave the same answer to me." He promised to go about the task "tactfully" and have the figures in a few days, but warned his superiors that he could "not butt in too hard." "There is, of course," he stated, rather delicate argument going on about the man-power question. The Americans rather suspect these strength figures are to be used in political arguments."

Some days later he telegraphed that he would be able to furnish shortly the numerical designations of the divisions that were to leave the United States under the terms of the Lloyd George-Pershing agreement. He explained further that he under-

<sup>1</sup> The "Appendix" was a copy of the Memorandum signed by General Pershing and Lloyd George. (See page 83.)



stood the order of dispatch of the divisions would be governed by the order of their arrival "at coast in America,"—a fact which indicated that shipment, after all, was to be by complete divisions. "General Pershing," he concluded, "prefers divisions to arrive complete so that training and equipment of artillery can proceed concurrently with that of infantry. He is as firm on this point now as before. Suggest you arrange with Washington that infantry of divisions come first to American ports."

The two messages display the meagre knowledge of the progress of events that had been imparted to him, their own liaison agent, by his superiors. For he could hardly have drafted the sentences in such fashion had he been aware, at the time of preparing the telegrams, of the Versailles meeting of February 4th. Thereafter the British War Office seemed to have become more intimate in its contact with him. The telegram of Lord Reading,<sup>1</sup> to the Secretary for State for Great Britain, dated Washington, 8th March, and containing the reaction of the United States to the Lloyd George-Pershing agreement was promptly relayed to him. Its transcript was as follows:

53,887 cypher M. O. 1

The following telegram from Lord Reading No. 958, dated 8th March, was received by Secretary of State, begins:

<sup>1</sup> Lord Reading had been sent to Washington in the latter part of January as the special representative of the Prime Minister.



The United States Government state that the Secretary of War has carefully considered question of transporting infantry of 6 divisions before other troops of these divisions and he has decided that it is considered best not to make an exception to the approved order of shipment which provides that infantry of each division precedes the artillery thereof and that a complete division be shipped before any part of next. United States Government add that this arrangement should not materially affect solution of shipping problem in view of fact that artillery material will not be shipped.

It is proposed that entire 77th, (?), 28th, 78th, 80th and 30th divisions be shipped in above order—1 in March, 2 in April and 3 in May. Details as to designation of units composing these divisions are expected very shortly from War Department and will be cabled to you. The question of 4 smaller ships for cross channel work has been raised. Ends.

## IX

On March 19, 1918, Lord Derby, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, sent the ensuing cable to Lord Reading in Washington:

War Cabinet has asked General Staff to put forward their views as to the prospects of obtaining a favorable military decision in 1919. The answer to this question depends greatly upon the amount of American assistance which can be expected.

I should, therefore, be glad to have as early as possible a conservative estimate based on the most recent experience, as to the strength of the American fighting force, apart from depot and replacement divisions and auxiliary

services, which will be in France at the end of 1918 and in June 1919.

There was considerably more behind this telegram than the mere desire for information. There is no doubt that apprehension existed at this time in the midst of the War Cabinet as to the progress of the mobilization, equipment and training of the draftees in the United States. The difficulties of the tonnage problem were understood, but disquieting rumors had reached London regarding the inconsistencies of the first draft operation, the tardiness in the supply of clothing and equipment for the draftees, and the inadequacy and lack of proportion of training programs and schedules in the concentration camps. The report of Lieutenant Colonel Murray,<sup>1</sup> who had but shortly returned from Washington where he had been on duty as Military Attaché at the British Embassy, did not greatly reassure the War Cabinet in these respects.

An especial significance must also be attached to this telegram due to the fact that it emanated from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and was sent to the special Representative of the Prime Minister in Washington. The matter had assumed governmental, rather than a purely military, aspect. It had become the official request of the British Government upon the United States Government.

Meanwhile, almost at the very moment of the

<sup>1</sup> For the full report of Lieutenant Colonel Murray, see Appendix No. 8.

despatch of Lord Derby's telegram, the great offensive of the Germans at Armentieres and along the La Basse Canal—the bitterly contested valley of the Somme—had been launched. During the days immediately following, while the British troops were fighting valiantly, “with their backs to the wall,” in magnificent response to the will of their great Field Marshal, the dispatches that passed to and from London and Washington were vibrant with the echoes of the violent conflict that was being waged in Flanders.

On the 23rd of March the War Office relayed a copy of one of these dispatches to General Wagstaff at Chaumont:

54888 cypher.

The following telegram to Lord Reading has been sent today:— Begins.

Your 1194 of March 20th. You should explain to President that we are engaged in what may well prove to be decisive battle of the war. The Germans are concentrating the greater part of their available forces against the British front and are pushing their attacks with the greatest determination. We have every hope of checking him, but our losses have been very heavy and will be heavier. This is only the beginning of the campaign of 1918 and we have to look to the future. In the present state of our manpower resources we cannot keep our divisions supplied with drafts for more than a short time at the present rate of loss, and we shall be helpless to assist our Allies if, as is very probable, the enemy turns

against them later. We have the divisional cadres ready with all necessary services and what we require is men to help us keep them filled. You should appeal to President to drop all questions of interpretation of past agreements and send over infantry as fast as possible without transport or other encumbrances. The situation is undoubtedly critical and if America delays now she may be too late. Ends.

You should make what use of this with General Pershing as you may think fit.

The pressure which had been brought to bear continuously upon General Pershing to feed his men into British brigades was becoming terrific. To add to its intensity, at a Meeting of the War Cabinet,<sup>1</sup> held at 10 Downing Street, on March 25, 1918, it was suggested that "it might be possible to use the United States troops in France." "It was also pointed out that there were 300,000 United States troops in France, and that of that number a considerable portion were high-class engineers, who were now building cold storage depots, etc., and that we should urge the American Government to send such men, as well as any Labour battalions that might have been formed, or could be formed, to the British front, with a view to perfecting the existing defences and creating others in their rear."

Mr. Baker being in London at this time, the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs interviewed him, during the course of this

<sup>1</sup> For the full account of the Minutes of this Meeting see Appendix No. 9.

same War Cabinet Meeting, and returning, informed the War Cabinet "that they had urged Mr. Baker to take the necessary steps to give effect to the assistance suggested above, and, as he was going across to France, to see General Pershing on the subject, at the earliest moment."

At the conclusion of the meeting it was recalled that General Pershing had supreme powers as regards the allocation of the American troops in France. The War Cabinet directed that Lord Milner, the Secretary for War, who was in Paris, be informed at once of the trend of the discussion that had just taken place, in order that he might attempt to persuade General Pershing to issue immediate orders for the realization of the War Cabinet's desires. Finally the War Cabinet requested the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to send a personal telegram to Colonel House, appraising him of the seriousness of the situation and "pointing out the pressing need of such assistance."

At the same time public sentiment in the United States was given due consideration. For the next day the Prime Minister sent a telegram to Lord Reading, "to be read at a public banquet in New York," which was couched in the following terms:—

We are at the crisis of the war. Attacked by an immense superiority of German troops our army has been forced to retire. The retirement has been carried out methodically before the pressure of fresh German reserves, which are suffering enormous losses. The situa-

tion is being faced with splendid courage and resolution. The dogged pluck of our troops has for the moment checked the ceaseless onrush of the enemy, and the French have now joined in the struggle. But this battle, the greatest and most momentous in the history of the world, is only just beginning. Throughout it French and British are buoyed up with the knowledge that the great republic of the West will neglect no effort which can hasten its troops and ships to Europe. In war, time is vital. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of getting American reinforcements across the Atlantic in the shortest possible space of time.

(Signed) LLOYD GEORGE.

Naught, however, could swerve General Pershing from his fixed resolve to preserve the integrity of his divisions. It is unlikely, moreover, that Mr. Baker ever contemplated assailing the determination of purpose of the American Commander-in-Chief. The Secretary of War was thoroughly familiar with the objective that General Pershing was striving to achieve and his attitude towards the latter—one too rare in the history of our country during the period of National emergency — continued steadfastly, throughout the war, to be that of non-interference and support.

It is true that General Pershing sent several non-divisional regiments of engineers, two or more railway, and one combat, to the British front. Also he was quite willing, and actually did, take over divisional sectors from the French, but these sectors were garrisoned by complete American divisions



under their own line officers and with their own divisional staff and high command; otherwise the unalterable decision of the American Commander-in-Chief remained immune to the psychological seduction which the tense crisis of a great battle had placed at the disposal of the British for his enticement.

His reaction to the strain exerted upon him, which must have been taut indeed, is portrayed in the Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, on March 27, 1918 (Minute 8, 374).

8. With reference to War Cabinet 373, Minute 6, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff,<sup>1</sup> reported that General Rawlinson had seen General Pershing at Versailles yesterday, and that General Pershing would not agree to put American battalions in the British divisions, as he was very anxious to keep his organization of divisions intact. He had, however, agreed to send American Engineers to the front, and to put American divisions into the line to relieve French divisions. General Wilson said that there was to be another meeting at Versailles today.

The War Council decided that :—

A strongly worded telegram, drafted by the Prime Minister, with a view to ultimate publication, should be sent direct to President Wilson from the War Cabinet, explaining the whole situation.

<sup>1</sup> The Chief of the Imperial General Staff was at this time Sir Henry Wilson, who had succeeded Sir William Robertson to that office, a short while before.

At the meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, on March 28, 1918, the "action" which General Pershing had promised General Rawlinson would be taken was confirmed by a telegram from Mr. Baker (Minute 8, War Cabinet 376).

8. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 8, the Prime Minister read a telegram which had arrived during the meeting from Mr. Baker, in which he recorded that the following action was being taken by General Pershing:—

- (a) The four American divisions were being put immediately into the trenches in order to relieve French divisions.
- (b) Three regiments of engineer troops were being sent to assist Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, and further divisions would be sent as soon as transportation was available.
- (c) In the case of American divisions under orders to leave the United States of America, the infantry would be sent first.

The War Cabinet expressed gratification at the prompt action taken by Mr. Baker and General Pershing.

In consequence while the draft of the Prime Minister's telegram to the President, "for ultimate publication" was being prepared, the War Office sent a message of thanks to General Pershing, through General Wagstaff, for the Engineer troops he had placed at the disposal of Sir Douglas Haig,

but even in so doing, the War Office could not refrain, as will be noted, from emphasizing anew the necessity for incorporating American troops in British divisions:

From: War Office            Dispatched 5:25 p.m. 2.4.18  
To: GENERAL WAGSTAFF, H. A. E. F. France

55540 Cypher. M.O.L. Please convey to General Pershing our appreciation and gratitude for the manner in which he has offered to place American units at our disposal to meet the present grave situation. In some of the British divisions the fighting strength of the infantry has been reduced below 2,000 rifles, and we cannot use them until we have increased their rifle strength though otherwise ready to take part again in the battle. The value of the American troops will depend largely upon the rapidity with which they can be incorporated into British Divisions. I would therefore ask that General Pershing will allow us to use the infantry now being transported through England as part of the monthly quota of 12,000 men for the American Army by battalions in accordance with the six division scheme, if he can do so without affecting immediate reserves for his own divisions which are taking part in the battle.

But General Wagstaff could accomplish no more than the others. It is doubtful whether he was now eager to do so, for, as will be seen later from the letters which he wrote about this time to Colonel Kirke and General Wigham, his entire viewpoint had changed markedly from that expressed in his

earlier communications, particularly in the "Wigham" letter of January 13, 1918.

The War Cabinet met again on March 30, 1918, and discussing the proposed assistance to be rendered by the United States came to the conclusion that should there be any "reluctance" on the part of the American Government to comply with the proposal of sending the infantry of the six divisions to the British, "it might be desirable to convene a Special Meeting of the Supreme War Council, either at Versailles or some place more convenient to General Foch, which should be attended by Generals Pershing and Bliss and Mr. Baker, the American Secretary for War." The Chief of the Imperial General Staff added that "he was in favor of such a plan, having regard to the fact that President Wilson had all along been a supporter of the Versailles Council."

As a matter of fact the Military Representatives of the Supreme War Council had met on March 27th, at Versailles. The question of incorporating American troops in French and British divisions had not been specifically raised, for the British had no desire to introduce the subject, save as a last expedient when their separate negotiations reached an absolute impasse; but the ways and means of transporting the American combat troops, especially infantrymen, more speedily and in greater numbers to France, had been the important topic of concern. It was concertedly determined, the U.S. Representa-

tive, General Bliss, being in accord, that recommendations should be made to President Wilson, urging the exclusive shipment of infantrymen and machine-gun units until the crisis of the existing emergency had passed.

At 9:30 P.M. on April 2d, the telegram of the Prime Minister to President Wilson was dispatched, in accordance with the decision of the War Cabinet at its meeting of March 27th. Because of its important relation to the issue it is given in full:

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CYPHER TELEGRAM TO LORD READING, (WASHINGTON)

Foreign Office, April 2, 1918. 9:30 p.m.

No. 1887.

*Secret and Confidential*

I want to impress upon you, in order that you may press it upon President Wilson and the administration, the supreme importance of time in the matter of American reinforcements. This battle is only at its first stage. We have survived the first crisis but there is bound to be another attack very shortly, but if we defeat the second there will be a third and so on until one side or other is exhausted or the winter puts an end to the fighting. The closest analogy to the present struggle is the battle of Verdun but fought on a vastly larger scale and with the whole Western front from Flanders to Venice as the theatre. In the stage of the 1918 campaign now beginning the enemy probably reckons for his success

on refitting his divisions faster than the Allies and outlasting them in man-power. He will, therefore, go on delivering blow after blow until he gets a decision or is exhausted.

It is very difficult for you at this distance, without being in close touch with the realities of the position, to realize how success or disaster in this battle will be decided by the exertions which America puts forth in the next few weeks or even days. I believe that the German chances now depend mainly upon whether or not America can get her troops effectively into the line in time. The difference of even a week in the date of arrival may be absolutely vital. In this contest an advance of a week in the arrival of troops may win a battle, and the delay of a week may lose it. And remember that no troops can be put into the battle line for at least a month after they land. They must be put through the final training by men acquainted with the conditions at first hand and this, I understand, is alone possible in France.

We have so often had large promises in the past which have invariably been falsified in the result that I am sincerely apprehensive that this last undertaking may not be carried out in actual practice. In these circumstances everything depends upon your going beyond the ordinary province of an ambassador, and exercising personal supervision over the carrying out of the pledge. The War Mission of which you are the head will enable you to find out where delays are occurring. Immediately a hitch does occur we rely upon you to bring pressure to bear in the right quarter to secure its immediate removal. In particular we depend greatly on Colonel House and hope he will devote his great influence and energy to this question until it is certain that 120,000 American infantry



are going, in fact and not merely on paper, to arrive in Europe in April, and in each succeeding month afterwards. If you can get more, so much the better. We can do with all you can send. I am told that there are barely 400,000 infantry in all the whole of the United States,<sup>1</sup> with which to enable President Wilson to redeem his pledge of sending 480,000 men. If so, it is essential that there should be an immediate fresh draft on a large scale.

In order to facilitate your task I am sending over Mr. Graeme Thomson by the first boat. Since the war began he has been at the head of our sea transportation and has moved millions of troops to France, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Salonica and in fact all over the world. He is undoubtedly the foremost and ablest organizer of sea transportation in the world. In order to assist in the important task of getting reinforcements from the camps into the transports we are sending by the same boat General Hutchinson of the Adjutant General's Department. You will find him a very intelligent and experienced officer.

Finally I give you herewith a time table of the transportation of American troops so far as our shipping is concerned. It is vital that we should work to an agreed schedule if we are to get the men across in time.

The estimates which follow relate to all troops other than those arriving under ordinary American War Office programmes. But they include the six divisions which it was arranged at last Supreme War Council should be sent over to be brigaded with us and the French. Of these I understand that only 1700 men have so far started.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix No. 8.—Report of Lieutenant Colonel Murray.

It is estimated that 61,000 troops can be embarked in British tonnage in April in accommodation becoming available apart from unforeseen contingencies at the rate of 16,000 in each first and third weeks, 12,000 in second week and 17,000 in the fourth week of the month. This does not include two Italian ships which will also be available.

Practically all the men carried in British tonnage will be brought to England and transported to Northern French ports by us. This leaves Brest and the Bay ports free to deal with the men carried direct to France by American shipping. Please obtain from American authorities at once similar estimate of numbers which can be carried in tonnage provided by America during the four weeks, including such of the Dutch ships or other Allied tonnage as are suitable and available. It is vital that we should have this time table as soon as possible in order that we may complete arrangements with Pershing in regard to reception, training and brigading with Allied forces.

It is also very important that the vessels of the American line be fitted and used to carry the full number of men of which they are capable. Up to the present they have been carrying less than 1,000 men per voyage. If they were fitted up as our troop-ships they could carry 2,000 to 2,500. "Mongolia" and "Manchuria" could carry from 2,500 to 3,000.

## X

General Wagstaff, who was entering upon his fourth month as British Liaison Agent and Chief of the British Mission at A.E.F. Headquarters, began, at this stage to exhibit a remarkable reversal

of feeling in regard to the employment of the American troops. Not that he indicated, or even apparently entertained, any contradictory opinion in so far as the inclusion of American reinforcements in British ranks was concerned, but rather in the expressed avowal that, if during the crisis the American troops were to go into the line with the British, they should be put there "by regiments" because "they would certainly accept their casualties better under their own Commanders," and that "immediately the crisis is past the units be collected and used as divisions or sent down to join the American Army."

It may have been the environment of Chaumont and the more intimate contact with General Pershing's Staff Officers that convinced him of the soundness of the American Commander-in-Chief's policy. In any event he completely abnegated the earlier suggestion contained in his letter of January 13th, when he stated, "Let the Americans send men by divisions or nominally so, without any equipment or transport. When you have got them here and concentrated in lumps you can use them when and where you like."

In fact he went further and informed the British War Office that he considered the American First Corps "quite fit to act on their own." As Chief of the British Mission, he had, no doubt, become familiar with the results that the U.S. Army General Staff College at Langres, Haute Marne, was accomplishing, since some of the Officers of his Mission

were Instructors there, and he evidently realized that the Americans were actually turning out versatile graduates, capable of performing the functions of the staff of a high command with competent and educated skill. His recommendations were set forth in an interesting letter he wrote, on April 5th, to Colonel Kirke, who, it will be recalled, was the Deputy Chief of the Military Operations Section of the British General Staff in London:—

MY DEAR KIRKE:

The papers the last two days have been full of the question of U. S. reinforcements. The messages from "our own correspondent" in New York, have described American enthusiasm over the dispatch of Americans for incorporation in British and French organizations.

Among fellows here, these articles and messages have made a rather bad impression. Firstly they arrive first through British sources, and they are mistrusted. Secondly they give the idea that the hands of the American Administration have been forced in this matter. Thirdly, if the enthusiasm is genuine, they think the reaction will be very strong when the Irish and Boche propaganda get going.

I think all this newspaper work on our part was unwise. It has probably been done to raise morale in England, and in that way is perhaps necessary and useful. But I suggest that something is necessary to counteract the feeling among Americans, that American men are being rushed to fill gaps which should have been filled by Englishmen. To do this, I suggest that in all the working out of the scheme (1) Americans are never

put into line in smaller units than battalions, or better still, by regiments. (2) Immediately the crisis is past, the units be collected and used as divisions, or sent down to join the American Army.

I know G. H. Q. can work the scheme on those lines. I think too, that more value will be got out of the units if they fight as American units, if they are actually used in a fight in an emergency.

In any discussions also, or in any propaganda issued, a great point should be made that this is a crisis and that this incorporation of units in British formations is only being done on account of the present grave emergency.

General Pershing will be willing to let the battalions of the six divisions go up into line almost at once, but if this is done, it is better to do it quietly, and to keep it out of the newspapers until they have done something.

They all want to get into the battle, and one division is being sent up now, but they are bitterly disappointed that a purely American force is not being sent. Personally I think it would have been possible to send four divisions up, as a Corps. I think they are quite fit (this First Corps) to act on their own. They would certainly accept their casualties better under their own Commanders. Their case is just the same as that of our Australians and Canadians, except that the Americans have more national spirit and stiffer prejudices.

The last point I want to make is this. You must not be taken in by what appears in British or American newspapers about the pleasure with which America is doing this thing. The real feeling is one of intense disappointment (1) that there are not enough Americans here now to fight as an independent unit and (2) that force of circumstances has made the American Govern-

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ment give in over a matter on which it had taken its stand, namely the purely American force.

You have won your point over this, and are getting your battalions. Be content with that and don't rub it in.

Try and keep our press quiet.

Yours sincerely

(Signed) C. W. WAGSTAFF.

The "battalions" of the six divisions, to which General Wagstaff referred were, of course, those which, with the auxiliary troops of the divisions (the 150,000 men) were to come from the United States to the British Expeditionary Force for "training" in accordance with the terms of the Versailles agreement between Mr. Lloyd George and General Pershing. Referring to Minute 1, War Cabinet 338, the Prime Minister had explained to the War Cabinet, at the time he introduced the agreement, that "General Pershing raised no objection to American troops being used with the British troops in training and since the best way of training troops would be by putting them in the line, we could rest assured that a large number of American infantrymen would be available for the purposes of co-operation"; and he added that, "General Pershing had stipulated that not only the infantry but the whole fighting personnel of the divisions should be brought over." It was also distinctly understood that when the "training period" was completed, the battalions were to be regrouped in their divisional organizations.



Yet General Wagstaff seemed to have acquired an interpretation of the Versailles agreement, akin to the original proposal of incorporating independent battalions of American infantry, for an indefinite length of time, in British brigades. This understanding on his part was more or less confirmed in a letter he wrote on April 11th, to his friend and Chief, General Wigham.

He discussed the case of certain Artillery units, which had arrived at Le Havre, ostensibly to go up to the British front, and were suddenly entrained for an American area. "I think," he wrote, "they honestly meant to let you have them, though there was something suspicious about the way they were cleared from Havre before orders got to them." He described his efforts to secure the remainder of the 6th U.S. Engineer Regiment and another Pioneer Regiment to be sent up to the British Sector. Finally he reached the subject of the infantry replacements, expressing himself in much the same vein as in his letter to Colonel Kirke:

I don't know how the question of the "Priority Schedule" for infantry stands. I know that this H. Q. has wired Washington to stop sending any troops except infantry for the present, and presumably all this infantry will come to the B. E. F. But I doubt whether you will get more than 60,000 which is looking a month ahead. I haven't been able to see the actual scheme. I rather think "P" hopes that something else may have happened by the end of the month, and he may be able to collar the subse-

quent shipments. I will watch this and let you know. But I take it you will be satisfied with that.

I do strongly recommend, however, that you collect these troops into *regiments* as soon as you can. Their whole organization is by regiment; battalions have no separate bundobast. If they were used as regiments under the Colonels they would feel that they were American units and fighting under their own flag (regiments have flags). It sounds a small matter, but it is a very real thing with these people.

General Wagstaff then enumerated the state of employment of the American divisions in France: the 1st Division with Foch; the 2nd Division in the line South of Verdun, having taken over the sector of two French Divisions; the 26th Division in the line North of Toul; the 42nd Division in the Baccarat Sector; the 32nd Division being mobilized near Langres, Haute Marne; the 41st Division, emasculated and spread all over the Line of Communication; the 3rd Division arriving in its training area at Châteauvillain; and the 5th Division, en route. He continued:

- I am continually urging the staff to collect the 1 Corps into *one* sector and to take it over and do something. At present they are not allowed to do anything by the French Corps Commanders and they are not pulling any weight—although they are really quite fit to do so.

I fancy the idea is to run a roulement and to keep one division continuously with Foch, bringing the used divisions down here again.

Personally I think the Americans would be much better used by putting 4 of the divisions together under their own Corps Staff, either with Foch or in a sector here. They are quite fit to function and I know all are very keen to have a show of their own. I am sure they would do all right.

He concluded his letter with a reiteration of his belief as to the location in the line that should ultimately be assigned to the American forces :

Incidentally I think this is a good opportunity to shove the question of putting the Americans in between the English and French. But that all depends on what your strategy is in this battle. Of this I know nothing, but if the intention is to hang on to the French and resist separation, then I think you should get the Supreme Command to put all the Americans in and about Amiens and base them on Tours, where they have their L. of C., H. Q. established. The transfer of the II Corps to this area, when trained, would be an easy matter.

The conception of an integral American Army, operating under the staff and high command of its own officers, which had been determinedly lodged in the mind of the Commander-in-Chief, was being fraught with innumerable hazards in the accomplishment. In time, however, the indomitable perseverance of General Pershing was to triumph over all intervening obstacles, and though the development of the Army had been retarded by the tremendous tonnage difficulties of a long and sub-

marine menaced sea-journey for the troops as well as by the harassing interruptions of great battles in progress, the achievement was ultimately to be realized.

PART II  
THE STRUGGLE





## PART II

### THE STRUGGLE

#### I

LEST perhaps, because of the many proposals and counter-proposals that had been interjected into the matter, some confusion might exist in regard to the exact situation that had developed in the early part of April 1918 concerning the co-operation of the American troops with the British and French Armies, it may be well to review briefly the various episodes that had transpired since December 1917, adjusting them in consecutive relations with each other.

On December 2, 1917, Mr. Lloyd George, through Lord Reading, proposed to Colonel House in Paris that American troops be incorporated "by companies" in British battalions, or if that system was not acceptable, that America replace British battalions with American battalions of infantry "in as many British brigades as possible." Colonel House committed himself to no other action than the promise to take up the matter with General Pershing and, upon his return to the United States, with President Wilson.

Sir William Robertson, then Chief of the Imperial General Staff, notified Sir Douglas Haig of the proposed plan and expressed the hope that the British Commander-in-Chief would discover no obstacle to it. Sir Douglas Haig, in replying, insisted that the incorporation be by battalion because of disciplinary and administrative reasons. This insistence was based on the British system of organization since in the British Army the battalion is the administrative unit. Sir Douglas Haig went further. He developed a "scheme" of his own, which contemplated that one American battalion would be introduced into a British brigade, to be followed by a second until gradually the brigade became entirely Americanized. Eventually the Americanized brigades would be consolidated into an Americanized division, etc. This was not at all in harmony with Sir William Robertson's idea, and he wrote Sir Douglas Haig to this effect, stating that the latter's scheme amounted "to accelerating the formation of General Pershing's Army," rather than supplying reinforcements for the British ranks.

Meanwhile Sir Douglas Haig had approached General Pershing on the subject through General Wagstaff, who was the Chief of the British Mission at the A.E.F. Headquarters. General Pershing declined flatly to accept the proposal.

Upon Colonel House's arrival in the United States, he submitted the proposal of Mr. Lloyd George to President Wilson and the Secretary of War. The result of their deliberations was a tele-

gram from Mr. Baker to General Pershing giving him full authority to make the final decision in the matter "after consultation with the French and British Commanders-in-Chief.

There followed many conferences, exchanges of communications, discussions with the British regarding the tonnage question, etc., during all of which every possible manner of pressure was exerted upon General Pershing to force his acquiescence in the British project. He consistently refused. Finally on January 30, 1918, at Versailles, he signed an agreement with Mr. Lloyd George wherein the British Government consented to bring over American divisions intact in the extra ships which it offered to furnish, with the understanding that the infantry battalions of those divisions were to be sent to British organizations for training purpose. In addition, however, the auxiliary troops of the divisions, that is the Signal Corps, Medical Corps, Engineer, Quartermaster, Ordnance, etc., units, were to be received also and trained in British areas. There was no objection on General Pershing's part, if, as part of the training, the infantry battalions were put into the line in British brigades. The Artillery of each division was to come under American direction immediately upon disembarkation.

The schedule of arrivals of these divisions—there were to be a total of six or about 150,000 men—provided a monthly rate of 60,000 until the maximum was attained.

During the latter part of March 1918, the great

German offensive began on the Somme. The British, fighting gallantly, were hard pressed, particularly after the débâcle of Gough's V Army, when the Portuguese broke and enabled the Germans to penetrate the front of that Army deeply. The British War Office apprehensive in the emergency, renewed their request upon General Pershing; only now the effort was made to induce him to permit the incorporation of his troops, that is the infantry battalions, that were actually in France in the British ranks. General Pershing again refused to destroy the integrity of his divisions, but sent several non-divisional Engineer regiments to Sir Douglas Haig and very willingly took over several sectors, by division, from the French so that the latter troops might be shifted to the scene of battle.

At the beginning of April 1918, the battle was still in progress. The British Prime Minister, chafing at the delay in the arrivals of the American troops that had been promised and perturbed with the thoughts of further attacks by the Germans, sent a strong cable to Lord Reading in Washington, instructing him to use every means in his power, even to the extent of going to the President, to accelerate the monthly shipments of men that had been agreed upon. In order to assist in the tonnage problems, he directed the Shipping Expert, Mr. Graeme Thomson, who had headed all of the sea-transportation activities of the British during the war, to proceed to the United States to be used as Lord Reading saw fit.

In the same cable the Prime Minister expressed great concern over information he had received that indicated there were barely 400,000 infantry in the United States, "with which to enable President Wilson to redeem his pledge of sending 480,000 men." This last statement had been made as the result of the declaration of President Wilson that the United States could not only send over the 60,000 men monthly, as provided for in the Versailles agreement, but was able to send 120,000 men monthly, for four months, to the Allies, if the sea transportation was available. Mr. Wilson had further committed himself to Lord Reading to the extent that he was not opposed "in principle" to these 480,000 men being brigaded with French and British troops, but that he had left the details of such matters to General Pershing.

Thus at the beginning of April, 1918, the Prime Minister, and naturally the War Cabinet with him, while sceptical of the American Government's ability to fulfill its part of the Versailles agreement in so far as the infantry of the six divisions was concerned, at the same time had begun to regard the American Government as having pledged itself to send 120,000 men per month, for four months, or a total of 480,000 men, to be "brigaded" with the French and British.

These expectations of the British Government, while primarily raised, by reason of Mr. Wilson's conversation with Lord Reading, to a degree greatly in excess of that which had been incited by the Ver-

sailles agreement, were also encouraged by concrete guarantee—the decision of the Supreme War Council, at its meeting of March 27th, that during the existing emergency “only infantry and machine-gun units should be despatched from America.” Yet the same complication existed as before the signing of the Versailles agreement. The final decision still rested with General Pershing and he was not disposed to regard the action of the Supreme War Council as either binding the United States Government to a set procedure or superceding, in any sense, the Versailles agreement, particularly as the latter pact had been apparently acceptable to the President and the Secretary of War.

It may be conjectured, from his earlier attitude, that the President had been very loathe to reverse the stand taken by the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces, that is if he was fully cognizant, and he must have been, of the settlement General Pershing had succeeded in arranging. Undoubtedly the predominating influence which had weighed effectively with Mr. Wilson was the action of the Supreme War Council, in as much as he had continuously maintained adherence to its recommendations.

It is necessary to appreciate fully these events in order to understand the subsequent gesture, though a feeble one, on the part of the Allies, which began with the purport of suggesting General Pershing's relief from command, but which collapsed before it was even half-way completed in the making.



## II

At a meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, on April 4, 1918, the subject of the "Co-operation of the United States of America," was again discussed (Minute 7, War Cabinet 382).

7. With reference to War Cabinet 380, Minute 3, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that his latest information indicated that the Americans were still embarking Divisional Headquarters for Conveyance to France.

Further, the Prime Minister added that when he had seen General Pershing on the previous day, the latter had stated that he had not received any information up to the present from America as to the latest arrangements that had been arrived at between the two Governments, although he was quite willing to cooperate in the fullest possible manner.

The War Cabinet decided that:—

The War Office should prepare a telegram urging the American Government to concentrate all their efforts in sending across American infantry and machine-gun units, and transmit such telegram as soon as possible to the Foreign Office for dispatch.

The reply of Lord Reading to Mr. Lloyd George's cable of April 2nd, arrived in London on the morning of April 8, 1918. It effectively dispelled any doubt as to the potentiality of the United States to furnish the 480,000 men which had been guaranteed, and was definite in its assurance that the program of troop shipments from America would be carried out as promised.

## 120 IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST!

### CIRCULATED TO THE KING AND WAR CABINET

Decypher.      LORD READING (Washington)      April 7, 1918.  
R. 8 a.m. 8th April.

*No. 1471 (K). Urgent. Secret and Confidential.*

Following for Prime Minister: Your telegram No. 1887.

I have made inquiry as to your information that there are only 400,000 infantry men in all United States. Chief of Staff has assured me that this is not so. We need have no fear that 480,000 will not be sent according to programme. Confidentially from other sources I learn that 480,000 represent all there are now in United States and that unless fresh drafts are made this number of infantry men will be exhausted but each month it is intended to call up 150,000 men at least and first call is now made for 26th April.

*Confidential.* Some question was raised with me yesterday by Counsellor Polk as to conversation between President and myself on 30th March, reported in my telegram No. 1360 to you: Secretary Baker has asked President whether he ever agreed to brigading of 480,000 with French and British. President has replied that he agreed in principle that there should be brigading but did not commit himself to total and reserved details for Generals Bliss and Pershing.

I do not find any substantial difference between this and my report to you which I quote:—"In principle he approves employment of troops in manner desired but leaves details to military chiefs."

Only difference, if any, that President had in mind was—(omitted)—that Generals might not wish to brig-

ade total 480,000 although nothing was said about it in terms. Nevertheless I quite understood that any such question was left open, if his military chiefs wished it, as President was careful to leave all military details to them. I sent you this full statement in case any question should arise about it.

By a coincidence there was delivered, on the same day April 8th, to Colonel Fagalde, the French Military Attaché in London, a note from the British Liaison Section of the General Staff, which contained a paraphrase of a cable sent from Washington to Paris by M. Andre Tardieu, the French High Commissioner in the United States. It will be noted how conclusively the message of M. Tardieu confirmed the statements embodied in the cable of Lord Reading.

#### NOTE FOR COLONEL FAGALDE

##### *American Army.*

M. Tardieu, the French High Commissioner in America, wired on the 2nd April that :—

He had had an interview with President Wilson, at which he had set forth the arguments for increasing, as much as possible, America's active participation in the War.

The President replied that everything depended on the amount of tonnage available. He is willing to send 120,000 men to France every month if the available transport permits this being done.

The whole question has been submitted to experts.

President Wilson added that a list of available tonnage

of the United States is being drawn up, after deduction of the boats necessary for transport of foodstuffs, for the Army, to Holland, to Switzerland and of the nitrates demanded by the Allies. The very utmost will be done to make use of every available boat for the transport of troops.

M. Tardieu added that the President has raised no objection to the incorporation of American Brigades with British and French Infantry Divisions, but that the opposition comes from General Pershing.

When, however, the War Cabinet met at 10 Downing Street, at noon on April 8th, any satisfaction, which these reports of President Wilson's congenial reception of the British proposals might have given rise to, was quickly disconcerted by the account of a recent meeting between General Hutchinson of the British War Office and General Pershing (Minute 3, War Cabinet 386).

3. With reference to War Cabinet 382, Minute 7, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that General Hutchinson<sup>1</sup> had just returned from an interview with General Pershing, and reported that the latter's attitude towards the incorporation of American battalions in British divisions was unsatisfactory. It appeared that General Pershing was only willing to include the infantry of six American divisions with the British. After this contribution, General Pershing desired to proceed with his divisional formation.

<sup>1</sup> General Hutchinson was shortly to be sent to Washington. See Mr. Lloyd George's telegram, No. 1887, April 2, 1918 to Lord Reading.

It was pointed out, however, that no hint had been received from America that President Wilson meant to go back on the decision already arrived at with regard to the inclusion of American infantry in British divisions.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs undertook, after he had obtained the necessary information from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, to send a telegram to Lord Reading acquainting him with General Pershing's attitude, but at the same time informing him that no action was necessary if he was satisfied that American infantry and machine-gunners were being transported to Europe on the lines agreed upon.

It was with absolute propriety that General Pershing assumed the attitude which General Hutchinson had characterized as "unsatisfactory," for the American Commander-in-Chief was adhering consistently to the terms of the Versailles agreement. This agreement he had entered into by reason of the complete authority that had been vested in him by the President. No subsequent modifications of the agreement had been entertained or recognized by him. Yet consequent upon the utterances of Mr. Wilson, the British Government now expected far more than the 150,000 men or infantry and auxiliary units of the six divisions. It regarded the United States Government as pledged by the promise of the President to send 120,000 infantrymen per month for four months or a total of 480,000 infantrymen, the entire lot of whom were to be brigaded with the British and French divisions. This interpretation is made clear in the telegram which the Secretary of

State for Foreign Affairs sent to Lord Reading immediately after the War Cabinet meeting of April 8th:—

No. 2017.

*Urgent. Secret.*

We are very much disquieted by the tenor of a conversation yesterday in Paris between General Pershing and Mr. Baker on the one side and General Hutchinson on the other.

From this it appears that in General Pershing's view no promise has been made to bring over 120,000 infantry and machine-gunners for 4 months to be brigaded with British and French troops.

The only arrangement which he recognizes is that of bringing over 60,000 infantry and machine guns belonging to the 6 divisions in British ships in the month of April to be brigaded with the British troops as they arrive during April. This scheme, as you will recollect, was in substance agreed upon before the German offensive matured and before the Prime Minister's appeal to the President.

Further it became quite plain in the course of this conversation that General Pershing's view is that these 6 divisions should be rapidly passed through the British army and then be withdrawn to be added to the American Army in the course of formation. He contemplates, no doubt, that when the infantry of these 2 divisions is withdrawn it may be replaced by a like number of troops brought over from America.

It is evident from this brief account of the conversation that General Pershing's views are absolutely in-



consistent with the broad policy which we believe the President has accepted. The main difference, of course, is that we interpret the promise as meaning that 480,000 infantry and machine guns are to be brigaded with the French or British troops in the course of 4 months. General Pershing admits no such obligation and does not conceal the fact that he disapproves the policy.

A second and minor difference is that, while the British Government quite agrees as to the propriety of ultimately withdrawing American troops brigaded with the French and British, so as to form an American Army, they do not think this process could or ought to be attempted until the season for active operations this year draws to its close, say in October or November.

I am very unwilling to embarrass the President, who has shown such a firm grasp of the situation, with criticisms of his officers. But it is evident that the difference of opinion between General Pershing on the one side and what we conceive to be the President's policy on the other is so fundamental and touches so nearly the issues of the whole war, that we are bound to have the matter cleared up.

I know that you are fully seized of the vital importance of the question, and I trust entirely to your discretion as to the methods by which our views can most effectively and speedily be impressed upon the authorities in Washington.

It may be worth adding that Mr. Baker, who was present at the interview between General Pershing and General Hutchinson, of which I have just given an account, sails today from a French port for America. I believe both he and General Bliss are, broadly speaking in sympathy with the British point of view.

The commitment of President Wilson to Lord Reading, that "in principle" he was not opposed to the brigading of American troops in British divisions, was undoubtedly made without the knowledge of either Mr. Baker or General Pershing. It was a political "coup," consummated by the British Prime Minister while Mr. Baker was in France, and its manner of accomplishment was to prove immeasurably dangerous not only to the results which the American Commander-in-Chief was striving to attain but also to the security of his position.

The responsibility, of making the decision in the matter of the incorporation of American troops in British and French divisions had, from the time of the original proposal, rested upon his shoulders. Having full confidence in the susceptibility of his own staff and those of the higher commands to assimilate rapidly, through intensive training and actual experience in the trenches, the tactical and logistical innovations of the war, he was satisfied, in his own mind, of their ability to administer, supply and maneuver the vast American contingent that was being massed in the cantonments of the United States for transport to the battlefields of France. He was equally certain, that the officers and men of the line, with reasonable opportunity for development, would render an adequate performance in combat, withal though they might occasionally blunder in the eagerness and excitement of an unfamiliar environment during the course of their first adventure. He had set for himself, therefore, a

definite goal—the formation of an American Army—and he was determinedly directing his efforts towards that end, despite the open insistence of the British that such a plan could not even be considered until 1919.

Moreover it must have seemed conclusive to him, that should he permit the unity of the American division, the basic, self-contained, fighting organization of the American Army, to be destroyed, it would be well-nigh impossible to reconstruct, at a later date, its unevenly trained components into the composite whole again. For while the infantry, brigaded with the British and French, might gain through experience a high degree of efficiency, the command and staff, the artillery and the auxiliary troops of the divisions must stagnate either in the United States, or else become stale in the diverse training areas of France.

An important feature too, that must have been constantly before him, was the morale of the troops themselves. It was not alone the matter of going into battle under their own flag and their own officers, although a dominant characteristic of the American soldier makes these conditions almost imperative. It was the bond that is created, very nearly overnight, between the organizations in the division and between the men in the organizations. The affection of a unit, or of an individual officer or soldier in that unit, for the division of which it or he forms part, is not unlike that of a strong family tie. In battle, *esprit* and *elán* are markedly

incited by the motive of Divisional achievement, and in the rest areas, the exploits of the Division become the topic of assertive pride.

These are the analytical aspects, in so far as the American troops themselves were concerned and quite apart from such reasons as General Pershing had given to the British relating to public sentiment at home, Irish and Boche propaganda, etc., that must have impelled him to stand so strongly for the preservation of the unity of his divisions.

The British Government, having been earlier informed by President Wilson, that it should negotiate these matters with General Pershing, and finding its attempts to gain its own ends futile, had chosen to go above his head, without his knowledge, to the White House. It was unfortunate that President Wilson, after having delegated, so positively, the adjustment of the proposals to General Pershing, should have later, when General Pershing had cemented a definite plan of action by the Versailles pact, changed his position, however slightly, to one of seeming reversal of his representative's determinations for the difficulties.

The clash that was to ensue, might have brought disaster upon the American Expeditionary Forces and the Country itself, had not the rare tact and sympathetic understanding of Lord Reading been interjected to avert the catastrophe.

### III

On the morning of April 9, 1918, General

Wigham, who had been a party to the same conference with General Pershing as General Hutchinson, appeared at the meeting of the War Cabinet. The general tone of the report he rendered was in harmony with that of General Hutchinson, though more harsh and more absolute.<sup>1</sup> Its effect upon the War Cabinet, probably due to the circumstance of its completeness in reference to the various phases of the subject as well as its description of General Pershing's indifferent reception of the decision of the Supreme War Council, was sufficiently violent to provoke an extraordinary measure.

General Wigham quoted General Pershing as stating that he had seen "it mentioned" that 120,000 men per month, composed of infantry and machine-gun units, were to be transported during the next four months to Europe, with a view to their incorporation, but that he did not know the basis on which these figures had been arrived at. General Wigham continued that, notwithstanding the presence of Mr. Baker, who confirmed his (General Wigham's) contention in this respect, General Pershing "had reverted" to his original scheme of bringing the men across in divisions and had announced that guns and equipment were required for such divisions. "Furthermore," General Wigham declared, "General Pershing did not appear to vis-

<sup>1</sup> For the complete Extract from the Minutes of the meeting of the War Cabinet on this occasion see Appendix No. 10. This was the same General Wigham, to whom General Wagstaff wrote so frequently.



ualize that any troops incorporated in British and French divisions would long remain there. He was further in favor of all replacement troops being at his disposal and not that of the Allies." Concerning the agreement arrived at on the 27th of March by the Military Representatives of the Supreme War Council, "that for the present only infantry and machine-gun units should be despatched from America," General Wigham pointed out that the American Commander-in-Chief chose to interpret it solely as a temporary arrangement subject to alteration. When questioned directly as to the number of American troops the British Government might expect, General Pershing had offered the 60,000 men that were to come through England during the month of April,<sup>1</sup> and had added he would reconsider the matter again at the end of that month. Difficulties in regard to the training of the High Command and Staff of the American divisions were disposed of by General Wigham with the promise that should American troops ultimately predominate in any original British division, an American Divisional Commander, with his own Staff, would be placed in command and British guns and gunners assigned under his orders to complete the divisional organization,—a suggestion which seemed to be acceptable to General Pershing.

General Wigham concluded his report by referring to the presence of the American Secretary of

<sup>1</sup> This was, of course, in accordance with the terms of the Versailles agreement between General Pershing and Mr. Lloyd George.



War as "very helpful" throughout the conference. "Mr. Baker," he said, "who had sailed for America the previous day, also agreed to the necessity for the maximum suitable American reinforcements being utilized in accordance *with the Versailles agreement.*" General Bliss, being present too, was, he had "gathered," in favor of carrying out the desires of the Supreme War Council. But summing up the attitude of General Pershing, he asserted that the impression had been left in his own mind that the American Commander-in-Chief wanted to make a United States Army instead of helping the British during the critical summer months.

These representations of General Wigham to the War Cabinet must naturally have inflamed to active heat its hitherto restrained resentment against the stubborn opposition of General Pershing. Whether General Wigham was unintentionally misleading in his conclusions due to a lack of sufficient perception and judgment in his appreciation of the situation, or whether he deliberately employed the insinuations that pervaded his account because of the weakness which, common to the military hierarchy of any country, expresses itself in the complete subjugation of mind into the corridor of thought that the superiors have builded, nevertheless he returned to the War Cabinet with the apparent confirmation of that which had, no doubt, been suspected by it when he had been charged to undertake the mission. In other words, psychologically, General Wigham satisfied the minds of the

Cabinet members that in order to overcome the sole obstacle to the accomplishment of their plan, it was imperative either to precipitate General Pershing's removal, or else, through the United States Government, compel the desertion by him of further attempt to form a concrete army, until the summer months had passed, for the more essential task, in their estimate, of helping the British divisions.

It was very nearly a distortion of facts that General Wigham indulged in, although he may have been only responding to a subconscious impulse to present the kind of report which he felt the War Cabinet expected. Otherwise he would not have injected the sly innuendo, that he did, in his narrative of the remarks General Pershing had made about the 120,000 men that were to be shipped each month during the next four months from America. For the inference, which the War Cabinet must have drawn, led most assuredly to the belief that General Pershing, the President notwithstanding, did not propose that aught but 60,000 men, of any contingent shipped monthly, were to go to British divisions. This seemed the more positive by reason of his declaration that the 60,000 men, who were to come through England during the month of April, would be allocated by his orders to the British front, and no more. The truth of the matter was, however, that General Pershing, at this stage, had received no official knowledge of a newly drawn schedule of American troop arrivals in Europe; and from Mr. Baker he must have learned that President Wilson

had agreed "in principle" only to the brigading of the 480,000 men with French and British divisions and would not "commit himself to totals," reserving the details for Generals Bliss and Pershing.<sup>1</sup> The position, therefore taken by the American Commander-in-Chief was strictly in accord with the contract entered into by him at Versailles and approved by his own Government.

Certainly General Pershing had not "reverted" to his "original" scheme of bringing the American troops across in divisions, for this had been a proviso of his understanding with Mr. Lloyd George. Likewise the stipulation that the infantry and machine-gun units, as well as the auxiliary troops of the six American divisions, were to be sent to British divisions for "training purposes," required no visualization on his part of an indefinite duration for such incorporation.

Finally the allusion of General Wigham to General Pershing's indifferent, almost disdainful, comments on the action of the Supreme War Council, was strangely incongruous in view of the opinion held by some of the British higher officials themselves of the practical value of that body. General Wigham's statement that "he gathered" that General Bliss seemed to favor "the carrying out of the agreement," was another discoloration, for he referred, of course, to the meeting of the Supreme War Council, which had resulted in no formal agreement but merely in recommendations for ratification

<sup>1</sup> See Lord Reading's cable No. 1471 (K), April 7, 1918.

by the Allied Governments. In any event, since General Bliss was a member of the Supreme War Council, it was to be expected that he would "seem" to support its decisions. The British General even tried to lend Mr. Baker's approval to the idea of brigading the total 480,000 men with the French and British, although he was more careful in selecting his phrases by reporting Mr. Baker as agreeing "to the necessity for the maximum *suitable* American reinforcements being utilized *in accordance with the Versailles agreement*."

The tenor of General Wigham's remarks could have left no other impression with the War Cabinet than that General Pershing, alone, constituted the aggravating interference with its endeavors. President Wilson, the Supreme War Council, the Secretary of War, General Bliss, all had inclined compatibly, in the approaches of the British Government, towards the end it solicited. One figure had remained aloof and unassailable, yet powerful enough to block successful accomplishment. It was necessary to employ drastic pressure immediately lest the entire project fail. Consequently, following upon General Wigham's report, the action taken was severe:

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed the War Cabinet that he had seen General Hutchinson on this matter, and had despatched a telegram to Lord Reading setting out the situation as had been explained by General Wigham, requesting Lord Reading to bring to the notice of the authorities at Washington the ap-

parent difference of opinion between General Pershing on the one side and what we conceive to be the President's policy, on the other.

The manner in which Lord Reading handled this delicate situation was admirable. He not only displayed a fine sensitiveness to the discord that might have been engendered by his intrusion, even as the Representative of his Government, upon the relations of General Pershing with the President, but he actually had the courage to warn his Government against attempting any move that might have embarrassed the President in this respect. His keen judgment and friendly interest are notably evidenced in the remarkable reply which he cabled to London:

LORD READING (Washington).

April 10th, 1918.

R. 1:40 p. m. April 11th, 1918.

Decypher.

No. 1526.

*Very urgent. Very Secret.*

Your telegrams Nos. 2017 and 2049.

I have just seen the President and have placed substance of your communications and views before him. We had some conversation about request made by you on March 30th and my report of his compliance with it. I found President Wilson rather disinclined to answer specific points although he was emphatic in his assurances to me that whatever it was possible for him to do to help



the Allies in present situation would assuredly be done, but that he had to consult his military advisers and be guided by them as to details. He informed me Secretary Baker was on the high Seas travelling home and that immediately upon his arrival President thought it would be advisable for me to see Secretary Baker with President.

President showed extreme reluctance to express any decided view on questions raised in your telegrams and I drew inference that he wished to avoid saying anything which might be reported to or used in London or Paris until he had had the opportunity of conferring with Secretary of State for War (group undecypherable) present discussions in Europe and knew General Pershing's views. In my opinion President did not wish even to appear to give a decision without waiting for arrival of Secretary of State for War. Consequently I did not press for any further answer and have no doubt I took right course, notwithstanding great urgency of matter, as represented by you. I have no doubt but that President will act in accordance with my original reports to you. I expect, but do not know, that his military advisers see objection to brigading of so many infantrymen and machine-gun units with British and French divisions because they fear this will retard, as it probably must, formation of an American Army and American divisions. President will form his own conclusions after he has heard Mr. Baker and will issue instructions accordingly.

I beg of you not to regard this report as indicating a change of view of President. I see nothing to indicate, although I agree that I am not able to give you a definite confirmatory statement.

It is highly important that nothing of my conversa-





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#### FERDINAND FOCH BECOMES A MARSHAL OF FRANCE

The baton is presented to him by the President of the French Republic, M. Poincaré, in the presence of the Prime Minister, M. Clemenceau, Lord Derby and group of French officers.



tion with President or my inference from it or views that I express to you should leak out.

Misunderstanding should be left to be cleared up by President Wilson direct with General Pershing doubtless with the assistance of Secretary Baker and, it may be, General Bliss. Forgive this warning. I give it for reason that otherwise President's task would be rendered more difficult, if he wished to act after concluding, if he did conclude, that there had been some misapprehension in General Pershing's mind, but I need not dilate upon importance of this aspect to you.

It was only two days after the receipt in London of this discreet and stabilizing message that a Note was passed by the British Liaison Section to Colonel Fagalde, which gave indication of the lively interest that the French Commander-in-Chief, General Petain, was taking in American troop arrivals in France, and of the way in which he proposed that American reinforcements be employed in order to ease the situation in the French Forces.

*Secret.*

13th April, 1918.

#### NOTE FOR COLONEL FAGALDE

##### *American Army.*

In a letter addressed to General Pershing and dated 10th April, General Petain stated that:

On the 25th of March the American Commander-in-Chief made the spontaneous offer to the French Commander-in-Chief of all the American Forces then in

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France and those whose arrival was expected on American boats.

An agreement was arrived at concerning these trained American troops already in France; one Division was to take part in the battle and three others to relieve French Infantry Divisions in quiet sectors.

General Petain is prepared, as from the date of his letter, to incorporate American troops as they land, by battalions or regiments, and has asked General Pershing to communicate to him the number of units and their dates of arrival in France. This cooperation, however, is not sufficient to make up for the losses in French Divisions, and certain Divisions will undoubtedly have to be suppressed; if it is possible it would be very desirable to obtain from America a sufficient number of men to make up French losses. The greatest need is for infantry and if a larger number of ships cannot be placed at the disposal of the American Government for the transport of Infantry, General Petain suggested that the transportation programme should be revised and a larger proportion of Infantry transported.

General Pershing's decision on this matter will have the greatest influence on both the present battle and the future course of the war.

(Sgd.) E. L. SPIERS

Brigadier-General,

General Staff.

The "spontaneous offer," to which General Petain referred, was made on the famous occasion, during the height of the battle, when General Pershing had embraced General Foch in public, offering to the

French Commander-in-Chief, through General Foch, every available American soldier in France, to join with the French and British in stemming the tide of the German advance. His action was acclaimed tumultuously in Paris, but few knew that the day before it occurred, he had declared, with shaking fist in a conference at Abbeville, the British General Headquarters, that he would make this action only with the definite assurance that, when the crisis had passed, he would be allotted a permanent sector of the line for American occupation and would be guaranteed freedom from interference in his efforts to form an American Army.

General Pershing had made good his offer by releasing four American Divisions (the 1st, 2nd, 26th and 42nd); one (the 1st), to take part in the battle and the other three to take over sectors of the line from French Divisions. It was also likely that he would have been found favorably disposed to enter upon an agreement with the French similar to the one he had made at Versailles with the British, whereby American Divisions, less their Artillery units, would be trained with French Divisions, including, as part of such training, the temporary incorporation of American battalions in French Divisions for front line experience. But this new proposal of General Petain, with its bald suggestion that "it would be very desirable to obtain from America a sufficient number of men to make up French losses," was more destructive in nature to General Pershing's plans for creating an integral



American fighting force than even the original request of Mr. Lloyd George upon Colonel House.

In those days the burdens, which were placed upon the American Commander-in-Chief to carry, were heavy indeed.

## IV

While these "parlers" were being conducted between the Allied Governments and with General Pershing, practical details were being worked out at the British G.H.Q., for the assignment and billeting of the American organizations upon arrival. It is noteworthy, in this connection, that the various orders, letters of instruction, etc., issued by the British G.H.Q. and the Headquarters of the different British Armies on the phases of the training and employment of the American units, conformed, almost religiously to the spirit of the Versailles agreement. Before examining any of these documents, however, or extracts therefrom, it may not be amiss to revert back momentarily to the meeting of Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing which occurred at Montreuil on December 28, 1917. It was there that the "scheme" of Sir Douglas Haig for the incorporation of the American troops had been amplified satisfactorily by the two Commanders-in-Chief—the "scheme" which had met with the disapproval of Sir William Robertson because it amounted in actuality "to accelerating the formation of General Pershing's Army." It becomes obvious, upon comparison, that in the essentials, the



scheme of Sir Douglas Haig and the terms of the Versailles agreement were identical, save that in the provisions of the latter it had been stipulated that when the training of the American units, as complete divisions, had been finished they were to be returned to the American Commander-in-Chief. So that whatever difference of view might have existed in other quarters, there was concurrence in thought and method of achievement between Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing.

The following extracts from an order,<sup>1</sup> issued by the British G.H.Q., on March 12, 1918, and transmitted to the British First, Third, Fourth and Fifth Armies, covered the general policies to be carried out in regard to the "Control of American Troops," "Allotment," and "Training and Command":

Arrangements have been concluded with the G. O. C. American Expeditionary Force,<sup>2</sup> by which one American Corps H. Q. and six American Divisions (less Artilleries) will be located for a period in the British Area for training with British formations.

2. The American Corps H. Q. will be located at Château Bryas (about 2½ miles N.N.E. of St. Pol.), and will be responsible for the general control and supervision of all the American Divisions, and will be authorized to visit and inspect these Divisions irrespective of the Army to which they are attached.

<sup>1</sup> For the complete order see Appendix No. 11.

<sup>2</sup> General Officer Commanding American Expeditionary Force, i.e., General Pershing.

3. The American Divisions and units will be allotted to British Corps and will be attached or affiliated as may be convenient to British formations or units in reserve, the Commanders and Staffs of the American Formations being attached to equivalent British Formations.

. . . . .

4. As the American Divisions are destined eventually to rejoin and fight with the rest of the American Army in France, it is desirable that they should be trained in accordance with the American regulations and training instructions recently issued or to be issued. During the period of preliminary training, therefore, the responsibility for training American troops while out of the line will rest with the American Commanders and Staffs concerned.

5. On completion of the preliminary training, American units will be attached to kindred British units in the line for practical training in the trenches, the Commanders and Staffs of American Formations being attached to equivalent British Formations. During this period, or whilst in the area of active operations, the technical command of all American units will be vested in the British Commanders under whom they are serving.

. . . . .

It was barely a week after the promulgation of this order that the great German offensive was initiated on the British front with violent force near the junction of its right flank and the French left. Its entire attention being concentrated on the battle that was being waged, the British G.H.Q.

issued no further orders, during the remainder of March, concerning the "training" of the American troops that were to be "attached" to its Divisions. At the same time there was no advice furnished it as to the prospective arrival of any American troops, which might have distracted its attention to the subject. For this was the period during which the shipping problem had reached its maximum confusion in the United States, the re-classification of the draftees was being made, and the policies in regard to training camps and schedules were being drastically renovated. Days of anxiety for the British War Cabinet at the tardiness of America's response in the crisis, and nights of waiting for the replies to the urgent cables sent to Lord Reading. The culmination was, of course, attained, with some degree of relief, in the promise of Mr. Wilson to send 120,000 men per month for four months, who were to be brigaded, "in principle," with the French and British divisions.

In consequence, on April 1st, the British War Office informed the British G.H.Q., in the Field, that it has been decided "that 120,000 American Infantry will be sent over each month during April, May, June and July" to be "probably distributed between the French and ourselves." It is clear that the British themselves interpreted President Wilson's promise to signify that the entire monthly quota would be Infantrymen and Machine-gun units, although the President refrained from guaranteeing such a condition. He had promised solely to

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double the 60,000 which General Pershing had conceded at Versailles and which had been agreed upon would consist of complete divisions, with their Artillery Brigades, auxiliary troops and Divisional Headquarters group.

Another message on April 1st, from the War Office to Sir Douglas Haig's Headquarters, gave definite notice that the shipment of the American troops had begun:

To:— G. H. Q. FRANCE.  
55499. April 1st.  
Cypher No. 1818 S. R. I.

Reference your Office letter No. 121/Transport/893 S.R.I. March 7th. Information has been received that embarkation of first troops forming part of the six American divisions has been commenced AAA. It is understood that 1700 are now leaving and 7000 will shortly be embarking AAA. You may expect first troops to arrive FRANCE about April 12th or a few days later AAA. Details will be wired you as soon as possible. AAA. From: TROOPERS.<sup>1</sup>

Another telegram followed three days later:

To:— G. H. Q.  
55735 4th April 1918.  
Cypher S.D.2.  
Your O. B. /2196 April 3rd.

6 Divisions less Artillery as originally arranged are coming to France for training with British Formations

<sup>1</sup> "TROOPERS" was the code designation of the British War Office.

AAA. The Infantry are coming over organized as Regiments but will be used by us as Battalions. AAA.

Addsd. G. H. Q. repto Gen. Wagstaff.

From: TROOPERS.

In this last telegram the British War Office reverted back again to the original arrangement concluded at Versailles. Copies of it were passed to the more important and interested Staff Sections at the British G.H.Q., with the following memorandum prefixed:—

O.B. /2196

A. G.  
Q. M. G.  
D. Sigs.  
E.-in-C.  
D. G. S.

---

Reference attached,

These divisions will be trained as originally arranged in O. B. /2196, dated 12th March.<sup>1</sup>

(Sgd.) R. WALLACE, Lt. Col.  
for C. G. S.

5th April, 1918.

On April 7th, the British G. H. Q. issued its T/1 (i. e. Training Order No. 1) order relative to the American troops. The order was confined entirely to the technical aspects of the training, including certain minor modifications of the instructions that

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix No. II.

had been set forth in its previous O.B./2196, 12th March, 1918, save for one paragraph, which had undoubtedly been inspired by the information regarding the 120,000 men received from the War Office on April 1st:—

In addition of six Divisions (less Artillery) a large number of additional Infantry Battalions will probably be attached to the British Army.

This “probability,” nevertheless, does not appear to have disturbed greatly the understanding which permeated the Headquarters of the British Armies and Corps, when they became successively designated to receive a particular American Division, whose departure from the United States had been confirmed. The instructions of these Armies and Corps, to the subordinate agencies within their own command, were invariably drawn up on the basis of billeting, equipping, supplying and training an integral American division, or two or more American divisions as the case might be, less their Artillery units. Thus a typical illustration will be found in the orders of the Second British Army in preparation for the arrival of the 77th U.S. Division, which was due to disembark shortly at Calais and was to be affiliated with the XVth British Corps of the Second Army in the Eperlecques (Recques) area. The underlying principle pervading all its orders was that the 77th U.S. Division was being attached to the Second Army for training purposes, and that



with the completion of the training, which was to include periods of service in the trenches to be progressively undertaken by platoon, company, battalion and regiment, the 77th U.S. Division was to be returned to the American Army. This attitude on the part of the Headquarters Second British Army was in compliance with the provisions of O.B./2196, British G.H.Q., which in turn had been drafted in full accord with the terms of the Versailles agreement.

In further emphasis of the mutual harmony in this matter that existed between the British and American Commanders-in-Chief, and consequently between the Headquarters of the lower echelons of their respective commands, Sir Douglas Haig forwarded to London, a memorandum containing a résumé of a meeting he had had with General Pershing on April 20, 1918:

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN  
FIELD-MARSHAL SIR D. HAIG AND GENERAL PERSHING.  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, U. S. ARMY.

It was agreed that American troops arriving in France should be disposed of as follows:—

On arrival American Divisions would be allocated for training as agreed upon by the respective Staffs to English cadre Divisions. The training staff of the English Divisions to be at the disposal of the American Regiments for instruction in English rifle, Lewis and machine guns, gas precautions and details of various kinds.

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As soon as approved by the American Divisional Commander, each American Regiment will be attached to an English Division in the line so that one American Battalion will be attached to each of the three Brigades of the English division. The American Battalion will be commanded by its own officers and will work as part of the English Brigade. The staff of the American Regiment will be attached to the staff of an English Brigade for instruction. In the next stage the American Regiment (3 Battalions), under its own Commander, will be attached as a Brigade to an English Division. Finally the American Regiments will be grouped again as a Division under their own Commander. The Field Marshal will be prepared, when this stage is reached, to place the artillery of an English Division, up to 6 Divisions at present, at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Army, until such time as either the U. S. Divisional Artillery arrives or the English cadre Divisions are made up to full strength.

(Sgd.) H. A. LAWRENCE,<sup>1</sup>  
Lieutenant-General.

(Sgd.) JOHN J. PERSHING,  
General, U. S. A.

### V

Upon the return of Mr. Baker from France, there followed, of course, a conference with President Wilson. Lord Reading, who was on guard for the opportunity he had planned in his cable, No. 1526, April 11, 1918, to Mr. Lloyd George, awaited the result of the conference. He did not have to ap-

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant-General H. A. Lawrence was Chief of Staff of the British G. H. Q.

proach the Secretary of War, however, for Mr. Baker anticipated his desire by sending him a memorandum covering the points that he had raised with the President prior to the Secretary of War's arrival in Washington. The substance of the memorandum and his recommendations thereon, were embodied by Lord Reading in a cable to the British Prime Minister:—

Decypher.      LORD READING      (Washington)

R. 6:50 p.m. April 21st, 1918.

*Very Urgent.*

Following for Prime Minister.

Last night Secretary Baker after long consultation with President submitted a memorandum to me substantially in terms set out hereunder. I considered it this morning with Generals Bridges, Hutchinson and Maclachlan who accompanied me later to Secretary's Office. Eventually and after I had some further conversation with Secretary Baker upon various points I took the document to submit it to you and (sic) upon the understanding that I should bring before him any objections that you wished to raise. Following is text of the Memorandum.

*Beginning of D.* (i. e. "Document")

Pursuant to the directions of the President and in conformity with his approval of joint note of Permanent Military Representatives at Versailles, United States will continue throughout the months of April, May, June and July to supply for transportation, both in its own and controlled tonnage and in that made available by Great Britain, infantry and machine gun personnel. It is hoped

and on the basis of study it is so far believed that total number of troops transported will be 120,000 per month. These troops when transported will, under direction and at the discretion of General Pershing, be assigned for training and use with British, French or American divisions as exigencies require from time to time; it being understood that this programme, to the extent that it is a departure from the plan to transport and assemble in Europe complete American divisions, is made in view of the exigencies of the present military situation and is made in order to bring into use co-operation with Allies, at the earliest possible moment, largest number of American personnel in the Military armament needed by the Allies.

It being also understood that this statement is not to be regarded as a commitment from which the United States Government is not free to depart when exigencies no longer require it, and also that preferential transportation of infantry and machine gun units here set forth as a policy and principle is not to be regarded as so exclusive as to prevent Government of the United States from including in troops carried by its own tonnage from time to time relatively small numbers of personnel of other arms as may be deemed wise by U. S. A., as replacements and either to make possible use of maximum capacity of ships or most efficient use of infantry and machine gun units as such transported or maintenance (sic) of sources of supply already organized and in process of construction for American Army already in France.

These suggestions are made in order that there may be a clear understanding of intention of U. S. and of mode of execution of that intention and they are not

stipulated as indicating any intention on the part of the U. S., until situation has in its judgment changed, to depart from full compliance with recommendation of Permanent Military Representatives as future of the cases will permit. (end of "D").

I told Secretary Baker that I had hoped that document would contain a definite undertaking to transport 120,000 infantrymen and machine gun units whereas there was no definite commitment and a reservation was made to include relatively small number of personnel of other arms. Secondly we should have (group omitted, probably "liked"?) discretion to have been exercisable by Supreme Military Council or General Foch. To first Baker replied that if there should be more shipping available they hoped to send more troops but that there were small numbers of personnel of other arms of which they must keep (?liberty) to ship in their own tonnage and secondly that U. S. Government could not be asked to part with discretion as to assigning its own troops for training and in use in divisions of other armies (?or its) own army might in an emergency require infantrymen but that General Pershing's discretion would doubtless be influenced by views of Council and General Foch. I do not think that we could use pressure upon these points at this moment.

My view is that we should accept document as presented. I think that President means to hold to his original undertaking whilst giving effect to some objections raised by Pershing so as to make it more easily acceptable by the latter. I shall send you further observations tomorrow.

The reply of the Prime Minister was sent to

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Lord Reading through the Foreign Office, at 12:45 P.M. on April 23, 1918:

No. 2379.

*Urgent.*

Your telegram to Prime Minister of April 21st.

We accept Secretary Baker's memorandum as it stands. Pershing is here and is discussing details with War Office.

The outcome of the discussions at the British War Office was an agreement between the British Secretary of State for War, Lord Milner, and General Pershing, that was to supercede the one contracted at Versailles. Yet it will be noted that the new arrangement differed only in one essential particular from the former plan.

*Secret.*

*Copy.*

It was agreed between the Secretary of State for War, representing the British Government and General Pershing, representing the American Government, that for the present the American troops be sent over in the following order :

A. That only the infantry, machine guns, engineers, and signal troops of American divisions and the headquarters of divisions and brigades be sent over in British and American shipping during May for training and service with the British Army in France up to six di-



visions, and that any shipping in excess of that required for these troops be utilized to transport troops necessary to make these divisions complete. The training and service of these troops will be carried out in accordance with plans already agreed upon between Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing, with a view at an early date of building up American divisions.

*B.* That the American personnel of the Artillery of these divisions and such Corps troops as may be required to build up American Corps organizations follow immediately thereafter, and that the American Artillery personnel be trained with French material and join its proper divisions as soon as thoroughly trained.

*C.* If, when the programme outlined in paragraphs A and B is completed, the military situation makes advisable the further shipment of Infantry *et cetera* of American divisions, then all the British and American shipping available for transport of troops shall be used for that purpose under such arrangement as will insure immediate aid to the Allies, and at the same time provide at the earliest moment for bringing over American Artillery and other necessary units to complete the organization of American Divisions and Corps. Provided that the combatant troops mentioned in A and B be followed by such service of the rear and other troops as may be considered necessary by the American Commander-in-Chief.

*D.* That it is contemplated American Divisions and Corps, when trained and organized, shall be utilized under the American Commander-in-Chief in an American group.

*E.* That the American Commander-in-Chief shall allot American troops to the French or British for training

or train them with American units at his discretion with the understanding that troops already transported by British shipping or included in the six divisions mentioned in paragraph A are to be trained with the British Army, details as to rations, equipment and transport to be determined by special agreement.

(Sgd.) MILNER.

(Sgd.) JOHN J. PERSHING,  
General U. S. Army.

In signing the agreement General Pershing appears to have yielded one important point of those which had been previously stipulated at Versailles; otherwise he had concluded a shrewd bargain. Under the new plan the infantry and Machine-gun units, together with the auxiliary troops, of the entire six American divisions, were to be transported across the seas, before any of the Artillery units belonging to these divisions were shipped; whereas in the Versailles arrangement, each division was to have been transported as a complete organization, its artillery brigade, upon disembarkation in France, passing directly to the jurisdiction of the American Commander-in-Chief. But General Pershing's acquiescence in this concession was clever in its aftermath. He proposed that the entire six American divisions, less their artillery brigades, should be shipped during the month of May, instead of at the rate of 60,000 per month, as originally contemplated, and in this way satisfy the British demands for the 120,000 infantry and machine-gun units, without

seriously breaking up the homogeneity of the six divisions. It was for this reason that he further insisted that the new agreement be specifically confined in its operations to the month of May only.

At this time it is probable that General Pershing had no knowledge of the memorandum given by Mr. Baker to Lord Reading, since it had only been completed and handed to the latter a day or so before, while General Pershing was actually engaged in the negotiations at the British War Office. Hence in refusing to obligate himself beyond the month of May, it is likely that he not only had in mind the transport of the six artillery brigades, which according to the provisions of the new agreement, was to follow immediately after the infantry, machine-gun units, auxiliary troops, divisional and brigade headquarters of the last of the six divisions, and which he was desirous would be undertaken by the British in June, but that he also hoped for a turn of the tide of the battle which, with the tension of the conflict lessened, would result in the six American divisions being considered adequate reinforcement for the British forces.

The London agreement, therefore, was a distinctly favorable gain for General Pershing, especially in establishing a fixed policy that after immediate aid had been rendered the Allies, the American and *British* shipping would be used, at the earliest moment, to bring over American Artillery and the other necessary units to complete the organization of American divisions and corps.

The account of the meeting between Lord Milner and General Pershing was presented to the War Cabinet at its meeting, held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. on April 24, 1918 at 11:30 A.M. (War Cabinet 398, Minute 2).

2. With reference to War Cabinet 397, Minute 4, the Secretary of State for War reported that the result of the conversations at the War Office with General Pershing was that an agreement had been reached as to the programme for the next six weeks.

The Prime Minister said that it had transpired from a conversation with Captain Guest, who had seen and spoken to American troops embarking from this country for France, that men had been sent forward from the United States without any method, with the result that men with six months' training were to be found side by side with raw recruits. General Pershing had confirmed this information, and had expressed surprise at the occurrence, which he supposed was due to the haste with which the orders to push forward troops had been carried out. He had said that it was necessary to sift and re-organize these troops before they could be employed.

At this time General Hutchinson, who, it will be recalled, had been sent to Washington early in April from the Adjutant General's Section of the British War Office, cabled his first observations on the question of land transportation in America. For he had been sent with the specific purpose of keeping in touch with the troop movements in the United States from the mobilization camps to the ports of

embarkation. Furthermore, by reason of his experience with this phase of logistics, he had been instructed to offer his services to our own War Department, wherever needed, in the problems of entraining or embussing the great masses of soldiers for transportation to the ships that were to carry them to France or England. His message was all the more assuring, therefore, because of his practical familiarity with the subject:

From: General Hutchinson, Washington.

To: Adjutant General.

Handed in 25th April 1918.

Received 26th April 1918, 10:45 p.m.

H. 5. April 24th, cypher.

There is no fear it seems that infantry units will be available for ships up to end of June but reinforcements may be short and to provide them, units may have to be broken up.

General Staff here convinced that machinery for training reinforcements needs reorganization. Reinforcements up to 3 per cent of total force per month are provided at present but this much too small. It would speed up reorganization if Pershing would ask for suitable provision of reinforcements.

I take it American infantry units will be rearmed by us with rifles, Lewis guns and Vickers for Machine-gun units.

15,000 colored labour to replace American troops on labour duties in France are included in the American programme.

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The answer to this telegram was prepared by the Deputy Chief of the Imperial Staff and despatched the same day:

From: D. C. I. G. S.

Despatched 6:45, p.m., 26/4/18.

To: General Hutchinson, Washington.

57196 Cypher. D. C. I. G. S. Your H. 5. to A. G. Am taking up with Pershing, who has returned to France, question of suitable provision of reinforcements. American infantry units allotted to us will be armed with rifles, Vickers and Lewis. Arrange if possible for 15,000 colored labor not to come through England but to go direct to France.

The proportion of replacements to be maintained for casualties arising from battle, sickness, injury, disease and other causes, in the combatant units (i. e. the Divisions, Corps and Armies), had been computed at an appropriate rate in the war-organizational charts originally drawn up by the War Department. Thus the Corps was at first constituted, although on paper only, of the Corps troops and six divisions, two of the divisions being replacement or "feeding" organizations which were to keep the Corps refilled continuously with the needed personnel. This system was never actually carried out. Its impracticability was recognized before its application was attempted, not only because of its inelasticity, but more especially because of its tendency to transform the Army Corps into an



administrative unit, when the primary object of interjecting the Corps formation between the Army and the Division had been to acquire tactical decentralization solely. Nevertheless the percentage of replacements in relation to the total strength of the forces in the field, retained the same commensurate rating, in principle, in the system of general Depot Divisions which was adopted as a substitute.

The information, then, from General Hutchinson that, in actual practice, this proportion had been reduced to three per cent, was indeed alarming to the British War Office. Such a margin would have been seriously inadequate for the troops assigned to duty with the services of the rear, much less for those committed to duty in the trenches. The action which the Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff wired General Hutchinson he would take, consisted in a telegram to General Wagstaff at A.E.F. Headquarters, instructing him to approach General Pershing "in a diplomatic manner," and, after explaining the situation that General Hutchinson's information had revealed, request General Pershing "to ask for suitable provision of reinforcements" to be made by the U.S. War Department.

On April 27, 1918, the British War Office cabled to Lieutenant General Bridges, the Chief Military Representative of the British in Washington, the news of the London agreement between Lord Milner and General Pershing. Forming part of the cable was the complete text of the agreement and of the

understanding reached by Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing, on April 20th, regarding the disposition and allocation for training of the American troops who were to be attached to the British Expeditionary Force in France.

On the same day in France, there was held a Conference at Abbeville, attended only by French and British representatives, during which, the French Prime Minister introduced the subject of the London agreement, expressing surprise that it should have been consummated without the knowledge or representation of the French Government and suggesting that it be supplanted by an entirely new measure, which he evidently considered would be more effective.

NOTES OF A CONFERENCE HELD AT ABBEVILLE AT  
10 A.M., SATURDAY, 27TH APRIL, 1918

*Present:*

M. Clemenceau  
Lord Milner  
General Foch  
General Weygand  
General Sir H. H. Wilson  
Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig  
Lieut.-General The Hon. Sir H. A. Lawrence  
Lieut.-General Sir J. P. Du Cane  
Brigadier-General F. L. Spiers.

M. Clemenceau complained that the British and Americans had made an agreement without consulting the French, and that General Pershing had gone to London

to discuss this matter without any French representative being present. By the agreement come to the American contingent for the French Army was to go to British formations. M. Clemenceau did not dispute the desirability of the arrangement made, but he could not understand how such an agreement could have been arrived at without the French being present. M. Clemenceau said he understood General Pershing was against American infantry and machine guns preceding other arms to France. What General Pershing wanted was to form a great American Army. M. Clemenceau asked that a French and British General should go to Washington and present a Joint Memorandum in favor of the view that infantry and machine guns should be sent to France. The agreement with General Pershing, dated 24th April, (i.e., the London agreement) was read. M. Clemenceau and Lord Milner agreed that this paper should be submitted to the Supreme War Council.

Lord Milner explained his policy as follows:

"Every month the first 120,000 men should be infantry and machine-gunners, certainly for the first three months, and if possible afterwards, and that all surplus tonnage in any one month should be for the purpose of carrying Artillery and Administrative units at the disposal of the Americans. This was agreed to . . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The complications that might have ensued, had M. Clemenceau been able to force the fulfillment of his request, may be easily conjectured. It was certain, nevertheless, that the British would have opposed

<sup>1</sup> The latter portions of the record of the Conference have been omitted here, as they do not relate in any way to the United States or to the American Expeditionary Force.

strenuously the course of action he had suggested, because of the disaster it would have wrought with the results of the efforts they had exerted so untiringly, since December 1, 1917, with Colonel House and General Pershing in France and, through Lord Reading, with President Wilson and the Secretary of War in Washington. The acceptance by M. Clemenceau of Lord Milner's alternative, that the London agreement be submitted to the Supreme War Council instead, must have afforded the British contingent considerable relief.

For the second and last time a move, which might have jeopardized the retention of command of the A.E.F. by General Pershing, was frustrated. The gesture had been restrained before the "ictus" could be delivered. It is true the restraining force had been applied in this instance by the British, who, themselves, not long before had entertained a somewhat kindred sentiment. Not that a direct appeal to President Wilson, for General Pershing's removal had been deliberately contemplated in either case. Rather that the representation by the British, or the French and British Governments jointly, to the President of a seemingly stubborn disinclination on the Part of the American Commander-in-Chief to execute the Washington commitment in the matter, might engender in the mind of the President a fear as to General Pershing's suitability to retain command, because of the latter's express adverseness to adjust, fully and harmoniously, the provisions of that commitment with the Allies thus making

operation, through lack of co-operation, difficult in the common enterprise.

The accumulating incidents of the first four months of 1918 bear convincing testimony to the loyal purpose and unswerving determination of General Pershing. From the very beginning he had not been left free to organize, train and fight his soldiers, but had been charged with all details in France including, as Sir William Robertson had told the British War Cabinet, "the responsibilities of a political character." This last charge would not have been so oppressive, had he been completely upheld in the "final decisions" which he had been authorized to make, or at least had the Administration refrained from making concessions incompatible with his decisions, and nearly always without his counsel or knowledge.

If on the one hand, he had accepted courageously, because of the dictum of his Government, an important rôle, not ordinarily selected for a soldier to fill, then on the other, he had the right to expect his Government to desist from any independant action that might transform that rôle into one of a stage hand. When the Administration deemed it wise, on account of diplomatic expediency, that his decisions should yield on certain points, it should have appraised him fully of developments, indicating its desires but leaving the granting of concessions to his formal announcement.

In the matter of Lord Reading's visits to the White House, for example, and the President's

promise, General Pershing should have been advised of Mr. Wilson's inclinations. He would have shaped his course accordingly and it is unlikely that he would have entered into the London agreement until he had assured himself of the policy of the Administration through the medium of the Secretary of War. A memorandum from Mr. Baker to him, instead of to Lord Reading, would have produced the most satisfactory results and would have prevented any contradictory aftermath that might tend to lessen the prestige that his Government had ostensibly invested him with.

Acutely aware of the volatile sensitiveness of the French, and suspicious, by experience, of the extremes to which the dogged persistence of the British would lead them, he delayed, until his hand was more or less forced into the signing of the London agreement. Fortunately he was shrewd enough, or it may have been the promptings of his intensive education in these matters during the past year, to bind the United States Government to a programme contracted for one month only.

## VI

During the month of May, 1918, renewed efforts were put forth by the British to secure the extension and even amplification of the London agreement. The consent of General Pershing to the attachment of the 120,000 infantrymen and machine-gun units, that had been promised monthly, for four months, by President Wilson to Lord



Reading, had been secured, but only for the month of May. The first move by the British, to have the programme extended to subsequent months, occurred at the meeting of the Supreme War Council which was held at Abbeville on May 2, 1918. The London agreement was presented and through the pressure of the Supreme War Council, General Pershing was induced to enlarge its provisions to include the month of June.

The final conclusion of the Supreme War Council was set forth by Lord Derby in a telegram sent to Lord Reading:

CYPHER TELEGRAM TO LORD READING. (Washington).

Foreign Office, May 3rd, 1918. 7:30 p.m.

No. 2680. (D)

Following is the text of Conclusion of Supreme War Council yesterday in regard to the employment of American troops which was accepted by General Pershing. Telegram from Prime Minister giving full explanation will follow immediately which will explain why we felt impelled to accept both these agreements. Begins:

*The Co-operation of the American Army*

It is the opinion of the Supreme War Council that, in order to carry the War to a successful conclusion, an American Army should be formed as early as possible under its own Commander and under its own Flag.

In order to meet the present emergency, it is agreed that American troops should be brought to France as rapidly as Allied transportation facilities will permit and,

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that as far as consistent with the necessity of building up an American Army, preference be given to infantry and machine-gun units for training and service with French and British Armies; with the understanding that such infantry and machine-gun units are to be withdrawn and united with their own artillery and auxiliary troops into divisions and corps at the discretion of the American Commander-in-Chief after consultation with the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in France.

It is also agreed that during the month of May preference should be given to the transportation of infantry and machine-gun units of six divisions, and that any excess tonnage shall be devoted to bringing over such other troops as may be determined by the American Commander-in-Chief.

It is further agreed that this programme shall be continued during the month of June upon condition that the British Government shall furnish transportation for minimum of 130,000 men in May and 150,000 men in June, with the understanding that the first divisions of infantry shall go to the British for training and service, and that troops sent over in June shall be allocated for training and service as the American Commander-in-Chief may determine.

It is further agreed that, if the British Government shall transport an excess of 150,000 in June, that such excess shall be infantry and machine-gun units, and that early in June there shall be a new review of the situation to determine further action.

This was followed by a cable from Mr. Lloyd George, explaining why the British had felt "impelled" to accept the conditions:

CYPHER TELEGRAM TO LORD READING, (Washington).

Foreign Office, May 3rd, 1918. 9:00 p.m.

No. 2682 (K) *Urgent*.

*Very Secret.*

Following from Prime Minister:

My telegram No. 2680.

Your No. 1894 and two unnumbered telegrams of May 1st, including personal telegram, reached Lord Milner and myself at Abbeville during meeting of the Supreme War Council held mainly for discussion of this question.

The difficulty has arisen out of General Pershing's attitude in the negotiations Lord Milner had with him in regard to the Baker memorandum. To begin with when Lord Milner saw him on April 23rd, General Pershing had never heard of the Memorandum. Also our position was weakened by the fact that the Memorandum provided that the 120,000 men a month, when transported, should be assigned for training and use with British, French, or American divisions under the direction and at the discretion of General Pershing. This left us dependent on General Pershing's goodwill. He is the man on the spot with whom we have to work and, in view of his attitude, and the danger of incurring any further delay, Lord Milner had to make the best bargain he could.

The whole question has again been exhaustively discussed at Abbeville. Monsieur Clemenceau and I made the strongest appeals to General Pershing to reconsider his attitude, and finally General Foch, as Allied General-in-Chief, read a very powerful considered statement in support of our views. I have already telegraphed you in

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regard to this. General Pershing, however, was again very difficult to persuade, and the utmost we could get him to accept, after two days of almost continuous discussion, was the agreement which has already been forwarded to you.

Finally the War Office (the Chief of the Imperial General Staff), telegraphed its version of the Supreme War Council's decision to General Bridges, the British Military Representative in Washington:

From: I. C. G. S.

To: General Bridges.

Despatched 3rd May, 1918. 11 p.m.

57656 cypher. (D. M. O.)

With reference to your 1894 and subsequent telegram of May 1st, our need for infantry reinforcements has not diminished in any way but is constantly increasing. Up to April 1st we had lost approximately 220,000 British infantry and machine-gunners. By sending all available drafts, including boys, from the United Kingdom we have only been able to replace approximately 145,000 of above. This has resulted in the reduction of 10 British divisions to cadres. To the end of July we have about 60,000 British reinforcements in sight in the United Kingdom, and, as fighting continues, must anticipate the reduction of further divisions.

All this was pointed out to General Pershing, who, however, absolutely declined to look further ahead than the end of May, up to which date he agreed preference should be given to the dispatch of infantry and machine gunners in the 6 divisions of the II Corps. This will

evidently be hardly sufficient to replace losses already incurred, and will be totally inadequate to meet prospective losses whether these are suffered by the British or by the French. In view of extreme urgency of case agreement was concluded to avoid a deadlock with Pershing which was otherwise inevitable, and to get a move on without further delay.

As a result of the Supreme War Council at Abbeville yesterday, we have now got Pershing's agreement that the May arrangements, viz. 120,000 infantry and machine gunners to have preference, will be continued for June, while he has further agreed that in certain contingencies the number may even be increased.

The British War Cabinet was informed of the Abbeville arrangement by the Prime Minister at its Meeting, held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on May 6, 1918. The remarks of Mr. Lloyd George shed light upon his motive in securing General Pershing's assent to the condition that if the British Government was able to transport in excess of 150,000 men in June, such excess should be composed exclusively of infantry and machine-gun units (War Cabinet——, Minute 9).

9. With reference to War Cabinet 404, Minute 4, the Prime Minister communicated to the War Cabinet the agreement reached by the Supreme War Council at Abbeville, as set forth above (Minute 8),<sup>1</sup> in regard to the co-operation of the United States troops. This agree-

<sup>1</sup> Minute 8 contained the full text of the conclusion of the Supreme War Council, already given in Lord Derby's telegram, No. 2680, May 3rd, 1918, to Lord Reading.

ment, he said, extended the agreement reached between Lord Milner and General Pershing. The cause of all the trouble, the Prime Minister said, was that President Wilson had put us in a difficulty by leaving to us the necessity of bargaining with General Pershing. The latter had refused to treat the men shipped in April, but arriving in May, as part of the April contingent. After a prolonged discussion General Pershing had been persuaded to extend to June the agreement he had reached with Lord Milner for the transport of 120,000 infantry and machine gunners in May. He had only agreed to this, however, on the understanding that the British Government would provide shipping for 150,000 men. Consequently as a result of this arrangement, the whole of the American shipping and British tonnage for 30,000 infantry would be devoted in June to carrying out General Pershing's divisional programme. During the Conference the Prime Minister had heard from the Shipping Controller that he believed he could bring 200,000 infantry in June. The Prime Minister then asked General Pershing whether, in the event of our finding it possible to ship an additional 50,000 men, he would agree that these should consist of infantry and machine-guns, and General Pershing had assented. Thus, as the result of the agreement, we had ensured transport of the following infantry and machine-gunners.

May .....	120,000
June .....	170,000

There was some discussion as to whether the six divisions referred to in Lord Milner's agreement with General Pershing would in fact amount to as many as 120,000 men.

Lord Milner said that every one of the 120,000 men



would be valuable troops. The American division amounted in all to 27,865 men, and the portions of it to be attached to the British were the following: divisional headquarters, 2 infantry brigades, a divisional machine-gun battalion, a regiment of engineers, a field signal battalion, an engineer train, headquarters train and military police. The divisional headquarters number 238. The infantry brigades, consisting almost entirely of combatant troops, made up 16,830, the divisional machine-gun battalion 393, the regiment of engineers, 1697; the field signal battalion, 488; and this together with the engineer train, 84; headquarters train and military police, 374, made up a total of 20,104. The remaining portion of each division, chiefly artillerymen, were to go direct to General Pershing.

Meanwhile the War Department in Washington had begun to revise its shipping plans in accordance with its understanding of the London agreement as modified at the Abbeville Conference. General Bridges outlined the Washington interpretation, and the action being taken in consequence, in a telegram to the British War Office:

From: Lt. General G. T. M. Bridges,  
British Military Representative  
Washington.

To: War Office.

Received at 4 p.m. 10/5/18.

B. 24.

Summarizing various cables to you. The Pershing-Milner agreement of April 24th and the subsequent modi-

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fications made by the Supreme War Council at Abbeville May 2nd, and is understood by the American War Department as follows: By the Pershing-Milner agreement of April 24th, preparations were made to ship troops in May in the following sequence:—

*Firstly.* 118,758 men, that is to say six divisions of a strength of 19,793 each. The figure 19,793 for each division is compiled as follows:—

Divisional H. Q.'s .....	238
Infantry and machine-gun units .....	17,223
Engineer regiment and train .....	1,779
Field Signalling battalion .....	448
4 Camp infirmaries .....	65

*Secondly.* 20,000 so called replacement troops, two-thirds of which have usually been infantry, but since these troops are sent as Pershing asks, there is no guarantee that infantry will be sent. He has already asked this month for 3,000 out of the 20,000 to be medical units.

*Thirdly.* 88,292 artillery and ammunition trains. The figure 88,292 is accounted for by 9,965 men left behind by each of the four divisions which sailed in April and 8,072 divisional troops left behind by each of the six divisions sailing in May.

*Fourthly.* There remains 8,000 to complete first combatant corps in France.

*Fifthly.* 14,372 to complete the second combatant corps in France.

*Sixthly.* 90,000 so-called Service Battalions of the rear troops, which means troops to complete the first and second phase of building up one complete American Army consisting of five combatant Corps, complete with

numerous army troops and general troops which have all been detailed to be sent over in five phases.

The agreement made by Supreme War Council meeting of May 2nd, now modifies the above as follows:

*Firstly.* In May six divisions, the 4th, 30th, 27th, 33rd, 80th, and 78th, making a total of 118,758 will be shipped.

*Secondly.* 20,000 replacement troops, such as General Pershing may require.

*Thirdly.* As many of the 88,292 divisional troops of the Pershing-Milner agreement of April 24th as can be carried over before June 1st. As interpreted by War Department here, on June 1st, the programme, as outlined by the Pershing-Milner agreement, ceases, and another similar programme headed by six divisions, that is to say 118,758 infantry and machine-gunners, etc., begins. As has been shown above, out of the 19,793 in the 1st echelon of each division only 17,223 are machine-gunners and infantry. Therefore to complete the 120,000 infantry monthly required by General Foch's memorandum the 17,000 replacement troops should be infantry and machine-gunners. In some units the training is backward. General Trotter tells me some 10 per cent of men going over in May in two divisions have less than eight weeks service.

Can you let me know the numbers of the divisions, allotted for training to British Army. At present this information is not obtainable here.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix No. 12.

The following notation appears on this document: "82nd, 77th, 35th, 28th, 30th, and 4th divisions are allotted for training with the British Armies. General Bridges has been informed."

The summary of General Bridges serves as an excellent illustration of the repeated revisions in its shipping program that the War Department was compelled to make in order to meet the changing demands arising from the importunities of the British and, to a lesser extent, of the French. These changes found their ultimate expression in the divisional cantonments throughout the United States and explain the causes for the frequent transfers, pre-emptions and other dislocations of large numbers of men, sometimes of entire units, that disturbed the morale of the Divisions subjected to the disheartening process and constantly interfered with the attainment by them of a balanced standard of efficiency for field service.

Stated in terms of the two agreements, rather than in numerical computations, the summary of General Bridges had been calculated to show that under the Pershing-Milner (London) agreement the War Department had planned a shipping program of six phases. The first phase comprised the transport, during May 1918, of six American divisions, less their Artillery Brigades,—a total of 118,758 men. These were to be carried in tonnage furnished by the British. The second phase consisted in the shipment of 20,000 replacement troops, who would follow immediately, in British tonnage, for allocation, in the discretion of the American-Commander-in-Chief, amongst the American contingents serving with the British, French and directly under General Pershing himself. The third phase provided for the

transport of the Artillery Brigades of the six divisions, who had been left behind and who were to be placed under General Pershing's orders upon disembarkation in France "to be trained with French material and join their proper divisions as soon as thoroughly trained." The fourth and fifth phases concerned the shipment, again in British bottoms, of "such Corps troops as may be required to build up American Corps organizations," and included the personnel destined for the I American Corps, with Headquarters at La Ferte sous Jouarre in the French Sector, and the II American Corps, with Headquarters at Chateau Bryas in the British Sector. The sixth phase embraced the shipments of the troops "for the services of the rear and such other troops as were deemed necessary by the American Commander-in-Chief."

The effect of the Conclusions of the Supreme War Council at Abbeville, to which General Pershing had assented, was to cause the following modifications in the previous plan of the War Department. The first phase, the transport of the 118,755 men of the six divisions, remained unchanged, as did also the second phase the shipments of the 20,000 replacements, since the British had offered at Abbeville to furnish transportation for 130,000 men. If after the completion of these two phases, there existed any excess British tonnage, the War Department proposed to transport as many of the Artillery units, that had been listed the third phase, as possible up to June 1st, when it would cease such shipments, as

the Pershing-Milner agreement would have expired, and begin again with the shipment of six additional divisions, less their Artillery Brigades, in accordance with the terms of the Abbeville arrangement. The fourth, fifth and sixth phases, of the first program were, therefore, to be temporarily desisted from, at least insofar as British tonnage was involved.

At this stage of the negotiations an incident occurred in the United States which might have aroused the "public sentiment" that General Pershing, in the earlier pourparlers, had demanded, so emphatically, be respected. There appeared in the American press, from Canadian sources, what purported to be the views of the British Government in regard to the military situation in the United States and the length of time, under the existing conditions of affairs, that must elapse before the formation of an American Army on the Western front could be expected. Though not literally so reported in the newspaper article referred to, the estimate of America's immediate value in the War was likened very closely to that which had been made at the beginning of 1918 in the "Notes of the British General Staff on Operations, 1917-1918," namely, "The American situation is quite unsatisfactory. . . . It will be well on in 1919 and more probably in 1920 before they are an Army in the sense in which the French or the British Armies may be considered today." At the time this report was



rendered to the War Cabinet, it must have left a flavor of pessimism in the minds of the Ministers. In no sense of the word, however, could it be construed as the official opinion of the War Cabinet and hence of the British Government.

Lord Reading telegraphed at once to London, the nature of the incident and the bad impression that had been created. The matter came before the War Cabinet at its Meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on May 14, 1918. (War Cabinet 411, Minute 11.)<sup>1</sup> After investigation it developed that in the preparation of the Weekly Summary in the War Office, from which the Minister of Information composed a communication for wide distribution, a subordinate had misapprehended a War Office note. His résumé of it had been inaccurate and misleading, in that he had applied to existing conditions a sentence, which in the original document, had referred to totally different conditions prevailing shortly after the United States had entered the war. The War Cabinet directed the Minister of Information to take the necessary action "in relation to the official responsible for the blunder," and decided that:

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a telegram to Lord Reading in the sense that the telegram sent to Ottawa did not emanate from the War Cabinet and did not represent their views, and authorizing Lord Reading to repudiate it in the strongest terms. At the same time, Lord Reading should be informed

<sup>1</sup> For the complete extract see Appendix No. 13.

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confidentially that the mistake arose owing to a blunder of a subordinate in the Ministry of Information, who omitted a vital passage in a War Office appreciation which referred to the situation which existed twelve months ago.

### VII

In replying to the cables which had been sent him on May 3rd, by the Prime Minister and Lord Derby (the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), relative to the Abbeville Conference, Lord Reading had expressed dissatisfaction, pointing out that he was convinced that the President would have made his view prevail in the end, whereas the War Cabinet assumed that the final decision was to be made by General Pershing. The Prime Minister was so impressed with Lord Reading's convictions, that he telegraphed a summary of the latter's suggestions to Lord Derby, in Paris, adding certain conclusions of his own:

CYPHER TELEGRAM TO LORD DERBY. (Paris)

Foreign Office, May 14th, 1918. 10 p.m.

No. 976.

(D)

*Secret and Personal.*

I have just received a long telegram from Lord Reading about American infantry. Following is summary—begins:— He is not at all satisfied with the Abbeville agreement. He had been convinced that the President

would make his view prevail in the end, whereas we appeared to have assumed that the final word would be with General Pershing. He understands that we had to deal with the man on the spot to whom discretion seemed to have been entrusted, and does not think that any useful purpose will be served by reopening question of agreement for the moment. He therefore proposes to concentrate his efforts on getting the largest number of infantrymen shipped in May. He suggests, however, that when the next meeting of the Supreme War Council is held early in June, General Foch's views should again be presented and a decision of the Council taken upon them. He is sure that the decision of the Supreme War Council affirming his view would be endorsed by the President. He asks whether if General Foch asked that only infantrymen and machine-gun units should be sent to the utmost number possible during the months of June and July, would not the Supreme War Council adopt his view? If any difference of opinion then occurred the President would have the decision of the Supreme War Council confirming the view that he had originally taken and from which he had never wavered. It may be that General Pershing's view by that time will have been modified especially as the situation may have then developed so much as to enable him to change his mind and adopt General Foch's proposals. Lord Reading says quite plainly that he thinks it is necessary for the President to have the recorded decision of the Supreme War Council endorsing General Foch's proposal before he can place himself in disagreement with Pershing. On the face of the record the latter's views appear to have been accepted at the last Supreme War Council. If any disagreement should arise authorities here in order

to maintain their position, must have the support of the Supreme War Council. Summary ends.

Since receiving this telegram I have just had another in which Lord Reading reports the result of an interview with Secretary Baker. Summary begins:— Baker expressed the opinion that no course was open to United States Administration save that of General Foch's approaching General Pershing, as President could not intervene in face of decision of Supreme War Council after the memorandum of General Foch or the substance of it had been presented to the Council. Inclination in Administration circles, however, was undoubtedly towards original plan. Lord Reading urged Secretary Baker to send as many infantrymen as possible at least during May in view of shipping we had placed at his disposal intended for this purpose only. Lord Reading said that if all shipping were used in May, 200,000 infantrymen could be sent over, and suggested that this should be done and that other troops might at least be postponed until next month after further deliberations by Supreme War Council. Lord Reading thought Baker sympathetic but felt bound to send considerable amount of artillery and other arms in view of Abbeville agreement. Secretary Baker then said that though no guarantees could be given, project was to send forward in months of May and June gross total of 435,000 troops, if shipping was available. Of these 288,000 would be infantrymen, machine-gun units, and infantry replacements; rest would consist of artillery, etc. He said that if this programme were carried out, more than 120,000 infantry per month would be forwarded. Reading replied that it appeared lamentable that in most critical moment we should be carrying troops to the number of 150,000 men in May

and June who could not be made use of for at least some time. Baker's attitude was that this was effect of agreement passed by Supreme War Council to which he must give effect though perhaps not too literally. Summary ends. I think it right to inform you as to the views of our ambassador in the United States. He took great part in securing adhesion of President Wilson to the original programme. In view of his telegrams I think that next meeting of Supreme War Council should be held in June to review the whole position. If you agree would you communicate with Signor Orlando and ask him to attend?

Then replying to Lord Reading's telegrams, the Prime Minister cabled:

CYPHER TELEGRAM TO LORD READING, (Washington)  
Foreign Office, May 14, 1918. 10:00 p.m.

*Secret.*

Following from Prime Minister:—

Your personal and secret telegram May 9th.

We are adopting your suggestion and trying to arrange for meeting of Supreme War Council beginning June. War Cabinet wishes me to say that your assistance in this vital matter has been invaluable. I do not know how we should get on without you.

These exchanges of proposals and counter-proposals, between the political chiefs in Washington and London, in regard to the number, proportion as to infantry and machine-gun units and priority of shipment of American troops, who were to be

transported in British tonnage, continued to the extreme of making a veritable palimpsest of the Versailles agreement. For the original Lloyd George-Pershing pact had been partially altered in turn by the Milner-Pershing understanding in London, by the conclusions of the Abbeville Conference, and was to be subjected to further erasure at the next meeting of the Supreme War Council in early June. Throughout the proceedings, however, the strong desire of both the President and the Secretary of War, to defer to and support General Pershing's decisions, must be acknowledged, particularly as such display of non-interference finds rare precedent in the chronicles of our other wars. Then too the difficult situations, created by the Allies with sincere intent no doubt but nevertheless based on too low an estimate of the United States military potentialities, were rather thrust upon the Administration than sought for by it. Had it not been for the embarrassing commitment which Mr. Wilson had been drawn into by Lord Reading, the restraint of the Administration from hampering its Commander-in-Chief in the Field, would have remained an almost perfect example in the military history of our Country.

In the field, during this period of the controversy, the Commanders-in-Chief and their respective Staffs were busily engaged in the task of receiving, equipping and training the Divisions of American troops that began to arrive with considerable rapidity in the



British Zone. In a letter to Lord Milner, dated May 14th, Major-General Guy P. Dawnay, the Assistant to the Chief of Staff at British G.H.Q. informed the Secretary of State for War as to the total rifle and machine-gun strength of American Divisions attached to the British Armies at the time.<sup>1</sup> His summarized account showed:

American	On Way to Training Area	In Training Area	
<i>77th Division</i>			
Infantry (Rifles)	....	12,000	
Machine Guns	....	2,500	
<i>82nd Division</i>			
Infantry (Rifles)	3,880	4,270	
Machine Guns	160	300	
<i>35th Division</i>			
Infantry (Rifles)	3,570	1,620	
Machine Guns	....	280	
<i>Total</i>			<i>Total</i>
Infantry (Rifles)	7,450	17,890	25,340
Machine Guns	160	3,080	3,240

General Dawnay also pointed out that advice had been received from the British Mission (General Wagstaff) at G.H.Q., A.E.F., that the Engineer Regiment of the 35th American Division had arrived at Brest and was under orders to proceed to the British Zone, while the Engineer Regiment of the 4th American Division was due in a day or so at

<sup>1</sup> The complete letter will be found in Appendix No. 14.

Bordeaux and, upon arrival was to receive similar orders.

Within the week following, the Second British Army was informed by the British General Headquarters that the 30th American Division was expected to commence arriving in France on May 26th, for concentration in the Recques Area. Meanwhile the Second Army was to be engaged in establishing the 28th American Division in the Lumbres Area, as the advance parties of that Division had already reported there. And the Fourth British Army was instructed that the 27th and 33rd American Divisions would arrive shortly and were to be attached to it for administration and training, being billeted in the Rue and Hallencourt, West, Areas, respectively.

This increased activity was brought to the attention of the War Cabinet by the Prime Minister, at its Meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. on May 15, 1918 (War Cabinet 412, Minute 13).

13. With reference to War Cabinet 410, Minute 14, the Prime Minister stated that, as a result of his visit to the War Office that morning, he had learned that there was no doubt that American troops were coming over in considerable numbers at the present time, and that 40,000 were now in France and 20,000 to 30,000 on the high seas. As regards these numbers it would be necessary to consult, however, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig as to when they would be ready to be placed in the firing line.

General Hutchinson, who had just returned from the United States, had expressed himself confident that the supply would be kept up until next July, when there might be a slackening as regards the number of men to be transported. As regards the personnel, General Hutchinson had formed the opinion that, although the younger officers were not at present very good, the men were excellent. He was further of opinion that there was a want of higher organization in the United States as regards military matters.

The Prime Minister drew attention to the delay that was taking place as regards the supply of artillery, and instanced the case of the time that had been wasted owing to the Americans being determined to adopt guns of their own instead of availing themselves of either French or British guns.<sup>1</sup> He added that the original idea of the Americans with regard to the creation of their army was only to call up 50,000 men a month. They had since increased that number to 250,000, and were aware of the fact that they could still further increase it to 450,000; but the organization of their resources was such that they were not in a position to clothe and give rifles to the larger number and, consequently, were not prepared to encourage public criticism by making a greater effort. The Prime Minister was of the opinion that it was highly desirable that we should get together criticism of their methods, in so far as they could be improved upon in furthering the prosecution of

<sup>1</sup> The Prime Minister was referring to artillery matériel, here, rather than personnel. His statements were incorrect in regard to the Americans "being determined to adopt guns of their own." The War Department had adopted the French 75 mm for the Divisional Artillery and had ordered larger calibre guns to be manufactured in both France and England (see Appendix No. 4).

the war, so that the Secretary for Foreign Affairs could send the same to Colonel House for such action as he thought best.

This led to the expression of the opinion that Colonel House would be of greater assistance here to the Allied cause than he would be in America, it being pointed out that Lord Reading had acquired so much influence in the States that the presence of Colonel House could be far better spared from that country than in the past.

It was pointed out that it was highly desirable that, if possible, Colonel House would be present at the next meeting of the Supreme War Council, which would be held during the first week in June.

The War Cabinet requested:

The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to go into the question of American representation in Europe, and to take such action as regards Colonel House as they might think desirable.

The American troops were now pouring into France at a tremendous rate. Within two weeks after the report given to the War Cabinet on May 15th, it had become certain that the arrivals would far exceed the 120,000 men promised for the month. A statement of the probable number that such arrivals would attain during May, was presented to the War Cabinet at its Meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., May 27, 1918 (War Cabinet 418, Minute 9).

9. With reference to War Cabinet 412, Minute 13, the Prime Minister referred to the recent telegrams which had been received on the subject of American reinforce-





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#### MARSHAL HENRI PHILIPPE PETAIN

The Commander-in-Chief of the French armies is congratulated by the Allied Commanders, after receiving the insignia of his promotion to Marshal of France. From left to right may be seen in the group: Marshal Joffre, Marshal Foch, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, General Pershing, General Diaz.

General Weygand, the Chief of Staff of General Foch, is in the left rear.





ments from Lord Reading (Nos. 2329, 2356 and other telegrams which had been received from the British Mission at Washington). Mr. Lloyd George said that, while these telegrams were fairly clear as to the number of troops which were being sent, it was very difficult to ascertain from them what actual numbers of American reinforcements were available in France at the present time, or what the position, as regards these reinforcements would be for the next two months.

The Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff,<sup>1</sup> said that during May 160,000 American troops would reach France. These, however, were not all infantry and machine gunners, as other services had been brought over, including field engineers, signallers and ambulances. Of these 160,000 it might be reckoned that 60 per cent to 70 per cent would be infantry and machine gunners.

General Harrington said that, in his opinion, there should be 70 American battalions complete by the end of this month, and that, of the 10 divisions which would reinforce the British Army, elements of 9 were in France and the advance party of the 10th<sup>2</sup> had arrived; 113,000 Americans had arrived in France this month, and he had just heard of another 40,000 sailing between the 18th and 24th of May, of which 26,000 were infantry and 3,000 machine gunners.

The Prime Minister said that it was very important that the Cabinet should know how many American infantry there would be available for use by the end of

<sup>1</sup> The Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff was General Harrington.

<sup>2</sup> The tenth Division was the 80th American Division; so that the American Divisions that had arrived either partially or fully at this time in the British areas were the 77th, 82nd, 35th, 28th, 4th, 30th, 27th, 33rd, 78th and 80th.

May, and to what extent the American troops in France would be available to repair the damage which would be done by the second German offensive of this year, and for a third German offensive when it came.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff promised to procure the information desired, but said that he had already asked Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig to send him a return every Saturday stating how many Americans would be put into line by the following Saturday. He would therefore have a statement on this subject to lay before the War Cabinet every Monday. Sir Douglas Haig had informed him that there would be, by the 1st of June, three American battalions in the line held by the British troops and that a further six were in training behind the line. Sir Douglas Haig was of opinion that, if necessary, these battalions in training could be used if the German offensive continued for any time, but General Foch was not so optimistic, and had expressed the opinion that it would be better for these battalions to be employed on the southern portion of the line. General Wilson said that he had just received a message from Sir Douglas Haig, who after a conference with General Foch, had now changed his plans, and come to the conclusion that it was undesirable to put the American battalions into cadre divisions, and had decided that they should be trained for three or four weeks in back areas first. General Wilson said that this decision might alter the arrangements in regard to transport, etc., which had been made. General Wilson pointed out that the American rule was that all the American troops arriving in France were supposed to have had not less than five months training before starting. It was evident that many of these troops had not had such training, and, owing to the unequal degree of

efficiency of the battalions sent, Sir Douglas Haig had desired to take out of each battalion, now in France, men unfit to go into the line and put the remainder of the battalion in, though under strength. General Foch suggested that it was more desirable to earmark battalions in categories according as they were ready to go into the line.

The Prime Minister pointed out that although President Wilson was insisting on five months training (telegram No. 2356), it was clear that the training which the American troops were receiving in America was in no way adequate, and Mr. Lloyd George suggested that it would be better for the American troops to be brought as soon as possible, either to England or France, where they could be trained under officers who had had practical experience of modern warfare. Mr. Lloyd George was strongly of opinion that any proposals on this head should be clearly put forward in a memorandum to be laid before the Supreme War Council at Versailles by General Foch, as General-in-Chief<sup>1</sup> of the Allied Forces on the Western front. There was another point which Mr. Lloyd George emphasized, was of the greatest importance, namely the steps which were being taken by the authorities in America for having an army available and ready for operations in 1919.

<sup>1</sup>At a conference at Doullens, on March 26, 1918, which was participated in by President Poincare, M. Clemenceau, General Foch, Lord Milner, General Sir H. Wilson, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, etc., it was suggested that General Foch be appointed to take charge of the combined Allied forces engaged in the defense of Amiens and vicinity. Sir Douglas Haig pointed out that in order that the best results might be obtained, it would be better if General Foch were appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the Allied forces on the Western front. This was agreed to by the French and British Governments. Later the position of General Foch as Generalissimo of the Allied Forces was confirmed by the Supreme War Council of all the Allied Governments.

General Wilson, when asked whether General Foch had any idea as to how many American troops he required, said that he (General Wilson) aimed at 100 divisions from America; but Mr. Lloyd George pointed out that, according to present arrangements, there would be only 42 American divisions in France by June of next year,<sup>1</sup> of which 28 would be combatant divisions and 14 replacement divisions.

The War Cabinet decided that:

(a) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should prepare two memorandum for the consideration of the War Cabinet.

The first memorandum should show:

(1) The number of American infantry and machine-gun units available for the reinforcement of the British line at the present time.

(2) The number of such reinforcements which are likely to be available in six weeks' time.

(3) The total assistance which may be expected to be available as the result of the American promise to brigade American battalions with the British Army.

The second memorandum to show:

(1) The preparations which were being made by the Americans to get in readiness an army for operations in 1919.

<sup>1</sup> Regarding this statement of the British Prime Minister, it actually developed that on September 26th of this same year, 1918, the first day of the Meuse-Argonne attack by the 1st U. S. Army—there were 38 American Divisions in France, of which 31 were combat Divisions (2 combat Divisions being employed with the British), 6 were Depot Divisions and 1 Division was being employed as Labor troops in the S. O. S.; on November 11, 1918, there were 41 American Divisions in France, of which 34 were combat Divisions and the remaining 7 Divisions were engaged as before.

(2) The recommendations which should be made at the Supreme War Council on the subject of numbers and the training of this army.

(b) Before the next meeting of the Supreme War Council the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should place himself in communication with General Foch, with a view to the latter's making a statement to the Supreme War Council on the above subjects.

The following afternoon the Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Harrington called the British G.H.Q., in France, by telephone, enumerating the points upon which the War Office desired information, in order to prepare the two memorandums for the War Cabinet and asking specifically for the recommendations of the British G.H.Q., "as to the essentials on which Americans should concentrate now, not only to improve the troops which are coming over but so as to ensure that they have an efficient army next year." General Dawney, acting for the Chief of Staff, General H. A. Lawrence, at British G.H.Q. replied by letter, in which are to be found these pertinent extracts:<sup>1</sup>

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, BRITISH ARMY IN FRANCE.  
29th May, 1918.

*Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff.*

With reference to your telephone message of this afternoon the following is the situation as regards the American troops in the British Area :

<sup>1</sup> The complete letter will be found in Appendix No. 15.

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	Infantry Rifles	Machine Gunnery
77th American Division.....	12,000 (12 battalions)	2,500 (14 companies)
82nd American Division.....	10,811 (about 11 batt.)	2,280 (about 13 co's)
35th American Division.....	9,865 (about 10 batt.)	2,259 (about 12 co's)
28th American Division.....	11,597 (about 11½ batt.)	2,306 (about 13 co's)
4th American Division.....	6,177 (about 6 batt.)	1,173 (about 6 co's)
30th American Division.....	4,566 (4½ battalions)	1,008 (about 6 co's)
27th American Division.....	2,509 (2½ battalions)	157 (about 1 co.)
Totals .....	57,525 (equivalent of 57½ battalions)	11,683 (equivalent of 65 companies)

2. None of the above troops are fit for the line at present. With regard to detailed proposals for the use of American troops, please see this office O.B. 2196 of 28th May 1918, with annexes.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

The expression "fit for the line," however, must only be taken as referring to the infantry battalions and machine gun companies. It will not be possible for a very considerable time to group these units into formations fit for the line unless British Commanders and Staffs from

<sup>1</sup> The order "O. B. 2196, 28th May 1918," will be found in Appendix 16.



the cadre divisions or elsewhere are available. The American Commanders and Staffs are almost wholly untrained, and without military experience so far as the majority of the Staff Officers are concerned.<sup>1</sup> This is a deficiency which it will take a very long time to make good.

. . . . .

7. The most essential need is a greatly improved standard of military knowledge and training for the American Commanders and Staffs of all grades and in all formations. Without this the fitness of the American troops to take the field will be delayed for a period the length of which it is quite impossible to forecast. Otherwise, the weakest point is the lack of power of command shown by the non-commissioned officers.

. . . . .

The organization of the American Staff seems to be capable of improvement, in particular by the elimination of the brigade H.Q., which appears redundant and a probable cause of delay and duplication of work, intervening as they do between divisional and the regimental H.Q. We have no knowledge, however, of what experi-

<sup>1</sup> The American Commanders and Staffs of the newly arriving Divisions were, especially in the grades of Lieutenant-Colonel and lower down, for the greater part National Guard or Officer Training Camp products. It was only natural that their staff experience should have been meager. Very few of them, save perhaps an occasional individual on the Divisional Staff, had as yet been given the opportunity of attending the Army School of the Line or the Army General Staff College, or the Army Machine-Gun School or any other of the twenty-one Army Schools that had been organized by the American G. H. Q., at Langres, Haute Marne, France, and had been functioning with most satisfactory results since December 1917.

ence of the existing organization has proved in the case of the American divisions in the line of the French Zone.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . .

### VIII

The Supreme War Council met at Versailles on June 1, 2, and 3, 1918. Prior to its assembly the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Wilson, carrying out his instructions from the War Cabinet,

<sup>1</sup> The practical soundness of this comment cannot be questioned. The Brigade Headquarters, a tactical one solely, has proven to be an awkward and unnecessary echelon—a clog—in the chain of command between the Headquarters of the Division and those of the Regiments. Its interposition has served to retard, if not effectively dam, the fluidity of influence in the staff channels through which the will and policies of the Division Commander are transmitted to the troops. Under the present staff arrangements, apparently devised with utter disregard for the common principle of organization that excessive indulgence in the theory of decentralization begets the highest form of centralization, there are four, instead of three, of these channels. In all of these, viz., Personnel, Intelligence, War Plans and Training, and Supply, the Regiment, by a figurative detour of the Brigade Headquarters, must maintain direct intercourse with the Division Headquarters. Thus all requisitions, strength and casualty reports, Intelligence reports, supplies, evacuations, etc., are accomplished direct between Division and Regimental Headquarters. Tactical control, however, must pass through Brigade Headquarters, especially on the battlefield, thereby providing an additional and unnecessary rendezvous point for delay and congestion of result. In the back areas the Brigade Headquarters becomes merely a supplementary adjunct to the inspection role of the Division Headquarters. At all times it consists of nothing more than a superfluous agency of supervision over the activities of the troops already overstaffed and heavily commanded. The abolition of the Brigade Headquarters has been advocated by some whose experience and position entitle their views to authoritative consideration. Nevertheless either through sentiment, because of its descendancy from the organizational scheme of Civil War days, or because of the opportunity it affords for the creation of Brigadier Generals, the military hierarchy in Washington continues to favor its hybrid existence.

had discussed the question of American reinforcements, particularly in relation to the British Armies, with General Foch,<sup>1</sup> and had received the assurance from the latter that concrete recommendations would be presented by him to the Supreme War Council. When the memorandum of General Foch was actually delivered at the meeting, it must have occasioned some surprise in British official circles. For, while it disposed of the problem of American reinforcements in a manner satisfactory to both the French and British, it declared plainly that the British Government must take more drastic measures itself to replenish the effectives of the British Divisions up to normal strength either by further domestic conscription or by a reduction of the British Armies operating in such distant countries as Egypt, Turkey, Palestine, etc.

The memorandum of Allied Generalissimo,<sup>2</sup> began with a brief comparison of the relative strength of the Allied forces and that of the Germans on the Western front. In terms of divisions, he showed that on May 30th the Allies had 174 divisions opposing 207 German divisions, and added: "This inferiority is made worse by the fact that the 12 Belgian Divisions (included in the 174), whose

<sup>1</sup> There had been little or no controversy with the French in regard to the use of American troops in French Divisions, since from the start the method had been one of progressively building up American Divisions—a method, in principle, similar to the "scheme" of Sir Douglas Haig—entered into wholeheartedly by the French.

<sup>2</sup> The full text of this important document will be found in Appendix No. 17.

action is limited to their own front, and in spite of the extension of this front as far as Ypres, are only opposed by 7 German Divisions—which fact amounts to this: viz., 162 Allied Divisions are opposed to 200 German Divisions, thus giving the enemy the advantage, to the extent of 38 Divisions.”

He proceeded then to the exposition of what, in his opinion, was the grave danger that threatened the Allies at the moment. Due to the increasing development of the battle, and the extent of the fronts of attack, the Allies were compelled to engage on these fronts and, in consequence to keep supplying these fronts with an ever increasing number of units. As these units had necessarily to come from the reserves, and as the flow of replacements going into the reserves was growing thinner and thinner, there had resulted a corresponding decrease of manpower in reserve. The menace was, if this continued, it would become impossible to keep sufficient reserves to meet fresh attacks, which were sure to take place, and at the same time maintain the strength at the front adequate, to feed the battle and insure the relief of tired units. He considered it “of vital importance, therefore, that, at all costs the total number of French and British Divisions should be kept intact, that their ranks should be replenished by other means than the breaking up of any of them, and that the whole of the Allied forces should be progressively and rapidly increased by the entry into the line of the American forces.”

The measures, some of which had already been

initiated in the French Army, that he proposed to the War Council for the accomplishment of this end, were outlined by him separately for each of the three main component Armies of the Allied forces on the Western front.

In the French Army the readjustment of the shortage in man-power was being attempted in several ways: firstly by breaking up the battalions or regiments in excess of the normal number required for the total composition of the French Divisions, that is any battalion or regiment, whether French or Allied, attached to the French, such as "Black, American, Polish or Tczech-Slav," which was not an integral part of a specific French Division, was to be incorporated, when the need arose, either as individual replacements or as a permanently assigned unit, to a depleted Division; secondly, by delaying the supply of replacements for Divisions, withdrawn from battle in decimated state, until the slightly wounded of those Divisions had been rendered fit again for duty and had been sent back to their organizations, thus ensuring that no surplus of men would accrue in a Division by reason of having its ranks too promptly filled and subsequently over-strengthened with the return of its casualties who had been evacuated in the Zone of the Army; thirdly, by the utilization of "creole and colonial natives," though not through conscription, to fill vacancies amongst French effectives of the same category; and fourthly to further augment the reservoir of man-power at home, by the intensive training



of the Class of 1919 and by the combing out of men employed in factories, munition plants and kindred national industries. The first three measures, General Foch observed, were based on simultaneous rather than progressive application and were actually being carried out. "These measures," he announced, "of which some may be called expedients, will enable France to keep all her Divisions, provided that the total casualties of the French Army from May 1st to October 1st do not amount to more than 500,000. But one realizes what the cost is!"

In the British Army, General Foch continued, the insufficiency of the supply of effectives furnished by the British recruiting system at home, had been brought to the attention of the Supreme War Council, in a pressing manner, as early as January 1918.<sup>1</sup> This condition had caused Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig himself to avow at the same session that, in the event of an important offensive by the enemy, he might be compelled to break up 30 of his

<sup>1</sup> It was during December 1917 and January 1918, that the British had begun their vigorous efforts to induce the United States to repair the depleted state of their effectives with American troops.

One may surmise why the idea, in this crisis, of overcoming its shortage of man-power by the transfer of troops from its Armies engaged in other countries to the British Expeditionary Force in France, was apparently never entertained by the British Government. With Russia broken and Turkey in collapse, such a move would have afforded opportune relief, unless the domination in the Near East with its moral influence upon India and its guardianship over such commercial interests as the oil fields of Baku and the prospective development of Russian coal and other mineral regions, assumed conclusive importance with the British Government for keeping a preponderant military prestige there.



Divisions in order to sustain the remainder of his Army at fighting strength. Before March 21st, the day the Germans began their attack on the British Front, no measures, productive of result, had been taken to remedy the shortage. In consequence Sir Douglas Haig had been forced, during the month of April, to break up successively 9 Divisions. In the middle of May, when his attention had been called by General Foch to the necessity of reconstituting these Divisions, the Field Marshal had agreed and had requested the War Office to send drafts especially for this purpose. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff had responded with the hope that there would go forward from the home country, 4 to 5,000 men of Class A, 15,000 men of Class B and 50,000 men of Classes not enumerated. Actually on June 1st, there had arrived in France, 28,000 men of Class A, which was the normal monthly rate of replacements for the entire British Expeditionary Force there, and only 7,000 additional men of Class B. Only one of the 9 Divisions had been rehabilitated; none of the other 8 had been even partially reconstituted. Furthermore, owing to the heavy losses sustained by the IX British Corps on the Aisne, the British General Staff was contemplating the breaking up of 2 other Divisions, which meant the suppression of 10 Divisions.

In other words, at the very moment of a decisive effort on the part of the enemy, the British Army was decreasing in strength day by day. It was even decreasing more rapidly than the American Army

was increasing; for the entry into combat of the American organizations could only be made progressively. The result was taking the form of a continual decline in the total strength of the Allies. "This consequence," General Foch emphasized, "is exceptionally grave; it may mean the loss of the war. The most drastic and quickest measures must be taken in order to avert this danger which has been pointed out for some time; that is to say, British effectives must be supplied without delay, either by the home country or by armies operating in distant countries, in order to make up the total number of British Divisions."

. In the American Army, General Foch stated, the programme of troop arrivals had been decided at Abbeville on May 2nd, and had included, for the month of June, the transportation of 120,000 men monthly, infantry and machine-gun units being given priority, or the total strength of 6 Divisions less their Artillery units. The programme for July had not as yet been drawn up. The circumstances, the Generalissimo insisted, which had demanded for May and June the arrival of infantry and machine-gun units before other American troops, still demanded, in fact more seriously than ever, that during July the same priority in troop shipments should be followed and that the total number transported should be increased from 120,000 to 200,000 men or the equivalent of 10 Divisions less Artillery units. A similar programme should also be adopted for August.

When the programme for July becomes completed, General Foch pointed out, there would be 34 American Divisions in France, or almost the total number, 42, that the United States had originally made provisions for. But, he remarked, although this met the requirements of the Coalition, it was necessary to go farther to guarantee the successful termination of the war. "The United States," he concluded, "who, when they joined the war, expressed their will to obtain the victory and who have already shown, by the results obtained in May (184,000 men transported or on the way) their energy in the realization of this main idea, the United States cannot limit their efforts to this programme. They must now consider a greater effort in order to pursue a war which will last a long time. For this object, they must contemplate a progressive increase of their Army up to 100 Divisions, and achieve this result by using their available shipping. If they do so, then we can expect to turn the scales in our favor as regards to the strength of the opposing armies and thus insure victory for the Allies."

In the final paragraph General Foch summarized succinctly the measures he had advocated to be undertaken by the French, British and United States Governments in order that the lost balance of manpower of the Allied forces on the Western front might not only be restored but also be established at a preponderance conducive to the assumption of the offensive by them on the battlefield, and urged the Supreme War Council to render a decision.

The action which resulted on the part of the Supreme War Council, including the terms of a new agreement consummated between Generals Foch and Pershing and Lord Milner regarding the number and priority of American troop shipments that were to be transported to France during June and July 1918, was described in detail at a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on June 5, 1918 (War Cabinet 426, Minutes 5 and 6).

5. The War Cabinet took note of the following resolutions, which were agreed to at the meeting of the Supreme War Council held at Versailles on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd June, 1918.

The Supreme War Council had a discussion on the subject of the appointment of an Admiralissimo in the Mediterranean. No conclusion was reached.

The Supreme War Council approved the following telegram to be sent to the President of the United States in the name of the Prime Ministers of France, Italy and Great Britain:

"We desire to express our warmest thanks to President Wilson for the remarkable promptness with which American aid, in excess of what at one time seemed practicable, has been rendered to the Allies during the past month to meet a great emergency. The crisis, however, still continues. General Foch has presented to us a statement of the utmost gravity, which points out that the numerical superiority of the enemy in France, where 162 Allied Divisions are now opposed to 200 German Divisions, is very heavy, and that, as there is no possibility of the British and French increasing the number of their Divisions—on the contrary, they are put to extreme straits

to keep them up—there is a great danger of the war being lost unless the numerical inferiority of the Allies can be remedied as rapidly as possible by the advent of American troops. He therefore urges with the utmost insistence that the maximum possible number of infantry and machine-gunners, in which respects the shortage of men on the side of the Allies is most marked, should continue to be shipped from America in the months of June and July to avert immediate danger of an Allied defeat in the present campaign owing to the Allied reserves being exhausted before those of the enemy. In addition to this, and looking to the future, he represents that it is impossible to foresee ultimate victory in the war unless America is able to provide such an Army as will enable the Allies ultimately to establish numerical superiority. He places the total American force required for this at no less than 100 Divisions, and urges the continuous raising of fresh American levies, which, in his opinion, should not be less than 300,000 a month, with a view to establishing a total American force of 100 Divisions at as early a date as this can possibly be done.

“We are satisfied that General Foch, who is conducting the present campaign with consummate ability, and on whose military judgment we continue to place the most absolute reliance, is not overestimating the needs of the case, and we feel confident that the Government of the United States will do everything that can be done, both to meet the needs of the immediate situation and to proceed with the continuous raising of fresh levies, calculated to provide as soon as possible the numerical superiority which the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies regards as essential to ultimate victory.

“A separate telegram (Appendix) contains the arrange-



ment which General Foch, General Pershing and Lord Milner have agreed to recommend to the United States Government with regard to the despatch of American troops for the months of June and July."

The Supreme War Council took note of the fact that an agreement had been arrived at on this subject between General Pershing and Lord Milner, and that this agreement had been adhered to by the French, Italian and Belgian Governments.

The Supreme War Council took note of the agreement reached that morning by the Foreign Ministers of France, Great Britain and Italy to approach the Japanese Government on the subject of action in Siberia; the common desiderata of the aforesaid Powers being:—

(a) That Japan should promise to respect the territorial integrity of Russia.

(b) That she would take no side in the internal politics of the country.

(c) That she would advance as far West as possible for the purpose of encountering the Germans.

It had been further agreed among the Foreign Ministers that, should Japan consent to intervention in these conditions, an effort should be made to obtain the assent of the President of the United States.

The following resolution was agreed upon:

In order to expedite the transport of Czecho-Slovak troops from Vladivostock to France, as agreed at Abbeville, the Supreme War Council resolve that:

(a) The British Government should ask the Japanese to assist with tonnage unless and until required for an expedition to Vladivostock.

(b) The tonnage at present allotted to the transport of



German and Austrian subjects from China to Australia should be diverted to the transport of Czecho-Slovaks in so far as this can be done without a dislocation of existing and essential military transport programmes.

The following declarations to be made on behalf of the Entente Powers collectively on the subject of :

- (a) The Czecho-Slovak and Jugo-Slav Peoples.
- (b) Poland.

agreed to by the Foreign Ministers, were noted :

"The Allied Governments have noted with pleasure the declaration made by the Secretary of State of the United States Government and desire to associate themselves in an expression of earnest sympathy for the Nationalistic aspirations towards freedom of the Czecho-Slovak and Jugo-Slav peoples.

"The creation of a united and independent Polish State with free access to the sea constitutes one of the conditions of a solid and just peace, and of the rule of right in Europe."

It was understood that the Governments separately would be at liberty to supplement these declarations as suitable occasion arose.

The Supreme War Council decided that the following declaration shall be published simultaneously in the press of the Allied countries on Wednesday, 5th June :

"The Supreme War Council has held its Sixth Session under circumstances of great gravity for the Alliance of free peoples. The German Government, relieved of all pressure on its Eastern front by the collapse of the Russian armies and people, has concentrated all its efforts in the West. It is now seeking to gain a decision in Europe by a series of desperate and costly assaults upon

the Allied armies before the United States can bring its full strength effectively to bear. The advantage it possesses in its strategic position and superior railway facilities has enabled the Enemy Command to gain some initial successes. It will undoubtedly renew the attacks, and the Allied nations may be still exposed to critical days.

"After a review of the whole question, the Supreme War Council is convinced that the Allies, bearing the trials of the forthcoming campaign with the same fortitude which they have ever exhibited in the defence of the right, will baffle the enemy purpose, and, in due course, will bring him to defeat. Everything possible is being done to sustain and support the armies in the field. The arrangements for unity of command have greatly improved the position of the Allied armies, and are working smoothly and with success. The Supreme War Council have complete confidence in General Foch. It regards with pride and admiration the valour of the Allied troops. Thanks to the prompt and cordial co-operation of the President of the United States, the arrangements which were set on foot more than two months ago for the transportation and brigading of American troops will make it impossible for the enemy to gain a victory by wearing out the Allied reserves before he has exhausted his own.

The Supreme War Council are confident of the ultimate result. The Allied peoples are resolute not to sacrifice a single one of the free nations of the world to the despotism of Berlin. Their armies are displaying the same steadfast courage which has enabled them on many previous occasions to defeat German onset. They have only to endure with faith and patience to the end to make the victory of freedom secure. The free peoples and their magnificent soldiers will save civilization.

6. . . . . 1

(iii). With regard to the question of American reinforcements, Mr. Lloyd George said that the decision which had been arrived at was a very good one. One of the difficulties at present to be faced in connection with American reinforcements was that *the rate at which they were pouring into the country was causing grave difficulties in assimilating them.*<sup>2</sup> Whilst it was true that comparatively few Americans were actually in the fighting line at the present moment, yet if a great emergency occurred, there was no doubt that many thousands now in France could be utilized. In this connection Mr. Lloyd George said that he had been informed by Mr. Thomas of the excellent manner in which one American Division<sup>3</sup> which had been engaged to the north of Château-Thierry had conducted itself.

Attached to the Minutes of this meeting, in the form of an Appendix, was a copy of the new agreement which had been reached between General Foch, General Pershing and Lord Milner at Versailles during the session of the Supreme War Council.

## APPENDIX

W. C. 426

An Agreement concluded between General Foch, General Pershing and Lord Milner with reference to the Transportation of American Troops in the months of June and July.

<sup>1</sup> Sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) of Minute 6 have been omitted, as they bear no reference to the United States forces, but expatiate upon the "difference of opinion with the Italians on the question of the appointment of an Admiralissimo in the Mediterranean."

<sup>2</sup> The italics are the authors.

<sup>3</sup> The 1st U. S. Division.

The following recommendations are made on the assumption that at least 250,000 men can be transported in each of the months of June and July by the employment of combined British and American tonnage:

We recommend—

(a) For the month of June:

1st. Absolute priority shall be given to the transportation of 170,000 combatant troops (viz., six divisions without artillery ammunition trains or supply trains, amounting to 126,000 men and 44,000 replacements for combat troops).

2nd. 25,400 men for the service of the railways, of which 13,400 have been asked for by the French Minister of Transportation.

3rd. The balance to be troops of categories to be determined by the Commander-in-Chief, American Expeditionary Forces.

(b) For the month of July:

1st. Absolute priority for the shipment of 140,000 combatant troops of the nature defined above (four divisions, minus artillery, etc., etc., amounting to 84,000 men, plus 56,000 replacements).

2nd. The balance of the 250,000 to consist of troops to be designated by the Commander-in-Chief, American Expeditionary Forces.

(c) It is agreed that if the available tonnage in either month allows of the transportation of a larger number of men than 250,000, the excess tonnage will be employed in the transportation of combat troops, as defined above.

(d) We recognize that the combatant troops to be despatched in July may have to include troops which have had insufficient training, but we consider the present emergency is such as to justify a temporary and excep-

tional departure by the United States from sound principles of training, especially as a similar course is being followed by France and Great Britain.

The decision of the Supreme War Council, in regard to American reinforcements, which Mr. Lloyd George had characterized before the War Cabinet as "a very good one," must indeed have proven for General Pershing a satisfactory culmination to the months of specious arguments that had hammered so strenuously against his determined purposes, testing his adroitness to the fullest degree lest unwary commitment frustrate their ultimate realization. A most successful solution had been attained. For the question of the manner and extent of employment of his troops on the French and British fronts had now become a matter solely between the Generalissimo of the Allied Armies and himself. No further approach could be made directly upon him by either French or British in separate attempt to force special allotment of the American reinforcements. The agreement which he had entered into with General Foch and Lord Milner, while establishing the number of men for monthly shipment during June and July and giving the priority to infantrymen and machine-gunners, in no wise stipulated any prescribed distribution of these arrivals between the French, British or American Expeditionary Forces. The circumstances of the battle front would undoubtedly affect the assignment of the American soldiers, but in proportion to



the relative weight these circumstances assumed in the judgment of the Generalissimo. An example that occurred immediately after the adjournment of the Supreme War Council, when, as will be later recounted, on June 4th five of the ten American Divisions in the British Zone were transferred out of it, gave early and unmistakable confirmation of General Foch's attitude in this regard. Furthermore General Foch had indicated not only the feasibility, but the desirability of the formation of an American Army. Lastly the danger of diplomatic interference without his knowledge was definitely removed from General Pershing's path, inasmuch as President Wilson had consistently obligated himself to support the decisions of the Supreme War Council.

In fact the response of the President towards this particular decision of the Supreme War Council was most favorable. It is portrayed, though somewhat by inference, in the Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on June 7, 1918 (War Cabinet 428, Minute 9).

9. Attention was drawn to a telegram No. 2535, dated 5th June, 1918, which had been received from Lord Reading. The Prime Minister read an extract as follows:

"M. Jusserand being anxious to receive a formal assurance from the President as to the 100 Divisions of American strength, put the point to him. Mr. Wilson replied that not only did this figure not frighten him, but that if necessary it would be exceeded. President added, however, in this connection that two points should be considered. First, in view of effort which the three Allied



Governments were demanding of the United States, it would be necessary for each of them to examine its military potentialities, and inform United States Government that number of combatants furnished was really the maximum possible. It might in certain circumstances, President said, be useful to communicate such a declaration to Congress, and even if need be to American public to meet possible criticism."

It was suggested that the matter should be referred to the Minister of National Service, in order that he might frame a statement on the subject, to be considered by the War Cabinet; or on the other hand, we might afford the American Government the same facilities for investigating our man-power as we were according the French Government. (War Cabinet 426, Minute 6.) It was pointed out, however, that if we informed the United States Government that the French were enquiring into the state of our man-power, it might convey the impression that the French were suspicious that we were not making full use of our resources.

Attention was drawn to the fact that Sir Auckland Geddes had already collected from the different Departments the material for a full statement as to the utilization of British man-power, and that this might be of assistance when replying to Lord Reading's telegram.

The War Cabinet decided that:

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, after consulting the Minister of National Service, should supply to Lord Reading a full statement of our man-power figures, and say that the French Government were already sending a representative to examine our figures, and should the American Government so desire, we would afford them similar facilities.

## IX

On the 4th of June, the day after the meeting of the Supreme War Council had been concluded, an order, (O.B./2196, 4th June 1918), from the British G.H.Q. to its five Army Headquarters, informed them: "It has been decided that the 35th, 77th, 28th and 4th American Divisions at present training in the British area are to be withdrawn before the completion of their training. Instructions regarding the withdrawal of these divisions will be issued very shortly." This "warning notice," which had resulted, of course, from the instructions of General Foch to Sir Douglas Haig, should have included the 82nd American Division as it had been scheduled likewise for transfer after the moves of the other four were completed. When the transfer became finally accomplished, therefore, there would remain 5 of the original 10 American Divisions in the British Zone, namely the 27th, 30th, 33rd, 78th and 80th Divisions.

Sir Douglas Haig, too soldierly in character, to protest the order of the Generalissimo, had directed the issuance of the necessary orders to carry out General Foch's wishes nevertheless he sought to retain the American Divisions by recommending as an alternative the "despatch" of certain French Divisions, who had reinforced the British during the March and April battles, to the South, pointing out that this substitution would involve less movement on the railways and produce the necessary reserves more rapidly. His opinion "that it would be desir-

able and more expeditious to leave the five American Divisions with the British forces" did not seem, however, to be shared by General Foch who replied through General Du Cane, the British Representative at the Generalissimo's Headquarters, that it was not possible for him to revoke the orders given for the transfer of the 5 American Divisions from the British to the French Zone, because the necessary arrangements had been made with General Pershing and all the details for the moves had been completed. General Foch assured Sir Douglas Haig that he had no intention of taking similar measures with the remaining American Divisions in the British Zone.<sup>1</sup>

At a meeting at the Ministère de la Guerre, Paris, 7th June, 1918, at which were present M. Clemenceau, Lord Milner, General Sir. H. Wilson, General

<sup>1</sup> The reply of General Foch was:

Au Q.G. le 5 Juin, 1918.

LE GÉNÉRAL  
COMMANDANT EN CHEF  
LES  
ARMIES ALLIÉES.  
Etat-Major  
No. 1242

*NOTE pour M. le Général du Cane.*

Le Général Foch estime qu'il est impossible de revenir sur les instructions données pour l'envoi des 5 D. I. américaines de la zone britannique en zone française.

Les accords nécessaires ont été faite avec le Général Pershing et toutes les mesures d'exécution ont été prises.

Le Général Foch n'a pas l'intention d'entendre cette mesure aux autres D. I. américaines de la zone britannique.

P. O. Le Major Général

WEYGAND.

Foch, General Weygand, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, Lieutenant-General Sir H. Lawrence and Lieutenant-General Sir J. Du Cane, the British Commander-in-Chief raised the subject again, but this time in the form of a protest against the transfer of Divisions under his command without his consultation. He concluded his remarks on this matter with the statement: "But before any order is given to move any more Divisions under my command due notice must be given me and an opportunity afforded me of stating my objections if I have any."

General Foch replied that he could not possibly agree to discuss any order he might issue as to withdrawing troops from the British front. He was Generalissimo, and his order and judgment must be accepted as final. He agreed, though, that all orders for withdrawal of troops from the British front should go through Sir Douglas Haig, and regretted that this had not been done in the case of the D.A.N. (the French Divisions).<sup>1</sup> Lord Milner and M. Clemenceau accepted General Foch's view. General Foch further promised that the 5 U.S. Divisions that had been left in the British Zone should remain there, at least until their training was completed.

<sup>1</sup> The D.A.N. were the French Divisions which Sir Douglas Haig had suggested to General Foch be transferred from the British Zone instead of the 5 American Divisions. General Foch had not only declined the suggestion but had subsequently ordered their return to the French area also. The order in this case went to the French Divisions direct, instead of through Sir Douglas Haig, which was the cause of General Foch's "regret."

The movement of the designated American Divisions from the British area to the French area began almost at once upon the receipt of General Foch's orders. Apart from the strategical reasons, which may have been proffered by General Foch for this measure, one cannot refrain from the inference that it was the initial announcement by him of a policy, determined upon to guarantee a more proportionate distribution of American reinforcements between the French and British Armies. Certainly the fact that the number of American Divisions transferred to the French area—five—was exactly one half of those that had been, or were in process of being, assimilated in the British Zone, lent color to such a supposition. By this measure also the complaint, lodged by M. Clemenceau at the Abbeville meeting of the French and British on April 27, 1918, that "the British and Americans had made an agreement without consulting the French and that General Pershing had gone to London to discuss this matter without any French representative being present," was redressed. "The American contingent for the French Army," which M. Clemenceau saw in the terms of that agreement, "going to British formations," was being reestablished in its rightful location.

Contemplating the measure from General Pershing's standpoint, the arrival of the American Divisions in French Sectors, brought the formation of his American Army more nearly possible of early achievement. He realized the deficiencies of his



troops in staff and line training, although he had contemplated a more intensive schedule of education than that of the British with its rather pessimistic estimate of the American officer's capability for assimilation. He was likewise appreciative of the value of front line experience for his green divisions; yet he had early insisted that such training and trench duty be carried out progressively with the ultimate development of his divisions into integral fighting units as the objective. Moreover when such an objective had been attained he expected these divisions to be returned to him for their incorporation into the American Army. From the French method of procedure he had acquired assurance that he could expect these results expeditiously. Then too he must have felt encouraged by General Foch's exhibition of expectancy for the creation of an American Army particularly after bearing in silence the dismal insistence of the British that such a formation could not be envisioned before the spring of 1919. It is not unlikely also that he had received from General Foch at this time some intimation of the proposal for the Meuse-Argonne offensive by an American Army in the early fall, should the events of the summer progress in a manner as would later permit of such adventure.

The difference of attitude of General Foch and Sir Douglas Haig at this stage towards the employment of the American troops, and especially towards



General Pershing's project for an American Army in possession of its own battle-front, was displayed on two occasions during the latter part of June 1918. The incidents illustrate importantly how on the one hand the French Generalissimo was constantly imbued with the thought of rapidly developing the *American Divisions*, as such, thereby making more quickly available the component elements of an American Army, and how on the other hand the British Field Marshal, judicious though his motives may have been from the British viewpoint, continued to strive for the retention of American Divisions under British command, which would necessarily tend to retard the formation of a unified American Expeditionary Force.

At a conference between General Foch and Sir Douglas Haig at Mouchey-le-Chatel, on June 18, 1918, General Foch inquired how it was proposed to produce Field Artillery for the American Divisions with the British forces. He explained that Field Artillery must be produced as without it these Divisions would be useless. It is obvious, of course, that General Foch was considering the employment of the American troops in terms of Divisions, for had he contemplated their incorporation by battalion or regiment in the British Divisions, he would naturally have not raised the question, since the artillery support would then be furnished by the Artillery units of the British Divisions into which the American units had been fed. Sir Douglas Haig replied that the only way he could see was that the British should

provide the guns and equipment, while the Americans provided the personnel. General Foch agreed that this was a possible solution. The Field Marshal then announced that he would take up the matter and "see what could be done in this respect."

On the 21st of June 1918, Sir Douglas Haig wrote at some length to General Foch, acknowledging the receipt of a communication from the latter (No. 1534, June 19, 1918), relative to the desirability of again "assembling the whole of the French and British troops in the zones of their respective Armies." Expressing his concurrence in such a measure, the Field Marshal suggested proposals for the mutual transfer of British and French Corps and Divisions in order that this end might be accomplished. He set forth, however, as one of the suppositions, upon which his proposals were based, that "the 5 American Divisions remain in the British Zone until the autumn of the year." In replying General Foch countered this point by declaring that he intended, at their next meeting, to go into the question of the reconstitution of the English Divisions in conjunction with Sir Douglas Haig, and also "the entry into the line of the American Divisions."

The divergent trend of these two influences, which, through force of circumstances, were able to affect strongly the manner in which his own soldiers should be used, must have been thoroughly appreciated by General Pershing. There could be hardly any doubt in his mind, acutely sensitive by this time to the advantages he had gained by the decision of

the Supreme War Council, as to the atmosphere most sympathetic to the development of the ideal he had striven for from the beginning.

## X

The departure of the American Divisions from the British area was reported to Lord Milner by Major General Dawnay in a series of letters. The first of these was written on June 10, 1918.

DEAR LORD MILNER:

Orders were received during the week from General Foch for the immediate transfer of the 4th, 28th, 35th and 77th American Divisions to the French area, with the 82nd Division to follow probably in a fortnight.

The 35th and 77th have already left and the 4th and 28th start on the 11th and following days. These divisions have been re-equipped with American rifles and have also returned the British machine guns issued. Stokes mortars are the only British arms that they have retained. They are keeping all the British horse transport issued to them, but return all motor vehicles.

Further progress has been made, with the concentration of the remaining divisions, and the attached return shows the machine gun and rifle strength of those that are left in the British Zone.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) GUY DAWNAY.

## 220 IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST!

### *Infantry and Machine Gun Strengths of American Divisions in British Area.*

	On Way to Training Area	In Training Area
<i>82nd Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	.....	11,215
Machine Guns . . . . .	.....	2,280
<i>30th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	920	10,299
Machine Guns . . . . .	160	2,338
<i>27th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	3,169	7,234
Machine Guns . . . . .	.....	2,091
<i>33rd Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	497	9,292
Machine Guns . . . . .	.....	2,262
<i>78th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	.....	2,873
Machine Guns . . . . .	.....	535
<i>80th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	6,902	927
Machine Guns . . . . .	1,166	.....
<i>Totals</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	11,488	41,840
Machine Guns . . . . .	1,326	9,506

Total number of fighting troops in and on  
way to Training Area..... 64,160

Again on the 17th of June, 1918, General Dawnay wrote to Lord Milner as follows:—

DEAR LORD MILNER:

During the last week the move of the five American Divisions to the French area was completed, as the 82nd Division left on the 15th instead of after an interval of a fortnight, as first ordered.

The return of the 6th, 11th and 16th Regiments of American Engineers <sup>1</sup> was also asked for and these units have now left the British Zone.

The 27th, 30th and 33rd Divisions and portions of the 80th Division began their training programme (first phase) on June 10th.

The strengths of the five Divisions now left in the British area are attached.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) GUY DAWNAY.

THE RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT MILNER,

G.C.B., G.C.M.G.,

Secretary of State for War,

War Office

LONDON, S.W.

*Infantry and Machine Gun Strengths of American Divisions in British Area.*

	On Way to Training Area	In Training Area
<i>30th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) . . . . .	.....	11,181
Machine Guns . . . . .	.....	2,357

<sup>1</sup> These were the American Engineer Regiments that had been loaned to the British at the time of the German offensive in March 1918.

## 222 IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST!

	On Way to Training Area	In Training Area
<i>27th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) .....	.....	10,403
Machine Guns .....	.....	2,091
<i>33rd Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) .....	497	9,949
Machine Guns .....	.....	2,262
<i>78th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) .....	497	9,949
Machine Guns .....	.....	2,326
<i>80th Division</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) .....	2,747	7,829
Machine Guns .....	158	1,166
<i>Totals</i>		
Infantry (Rifles) .....	4,913	49,111
Machine Guns .....	158	10,202

Total number of fighting troops in and on  
way to Training Area..... 64,384

These reports, as indicated, show only the "total number of fighting troops, (i. e. Infantry and Machine-gun units) in and on the way to Training areas" of the British on the dates they are rendered. It will be noted that the "auxiliary troops" of the Divisions, such as the Engineer Regiment, the Signal Corps Battalion, the Headquarters Troop, Military Police, etc., are not included; also the computations for the Infantry are in terms of "Rifles," thus eliminating the various Infantry Headquarters



and Staffs, personnel of Regimental and Battalion Combat trains, Intelligence platoons at the different echelons of command, etc., etc. When the full complement of these five Divisions, less their Artillery brigades, were concentrated in the British Zone there would result a total of approximately 100,000 men or the Infantry, Machine-Gun units and Auxiliary troops of *five* Divisions. In other words there would be one less Division than the number which General Pershing had consented to yield in the original Versailles agreement between Mr. Lloyd George and himself. This is significant, because in the actual course of subsequent events no more American Divisions were sent to the British Armies.

Some premonition of such an eventuality must have arisen in the midst of the War Cabinet at this time. For the Prime Minister sent word to General Du Cane, the British Representative at General Foch's Headquarters, that it had been reported General Pershing did not intend to send any more American troops to either the French or British for training and that General Du Cane should ascertain whether or not General Foch had agreed to such a policy. General Du Cane replied by telephone message at 6:45 P.M. on June 13th:

1. General Pershing does not intend to send any more Americans to either the French or British for training.
2. The Prime Minister told General Du Cane to find out if General Foch agreed to this.
3. General Foch said:

(1) This proposal of General Pershing's did not contravene either the Abbeville or Versailles Agreements.

(2) That he had not seen the American troops, and therefore could not say whether their state of training was such that they should be trained by British or French.

(3) That he expected that General Pershing would place at his (General Foch's) disposal, such American Infantry as he could not embody in those American divisions which have American Artillery.

(4) That the arrangements are at present so much in the air that he could not say how many, if any, of the American Infantry thus placed at his disposal (paragraph 3), would be sent to the British.

The answer of General Foch was not agreeable to the British War Cabinet. Whether because of his support of General Pershing's action as entirely tenable under the agreements contracted, or because of his implied announcement that henceforth the affairs of the battlefield were to be conducted by him independently of political interference, or because of misgivings that the interests of the British forces in the matter of American reinforcements might not be served with the same impartiality as those of the French, whatever the reasons, the declarations of the Generalissimo could hardly have instilled wholesome acceptance in the minds of the British Ministers. Then too, the remembrance, if it arose, that the plan of submitting the affair to the Supreme War Council for decision, had in the first instance been initiated in their own circle, could not have mollified the disturbance of their compla-

gency. The reaction is shown in the Extracts from the Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on July 12, 1918 (War Cabinet 24, Minute 2).

2. The Director of Military Operations reported that all five American Divisions training with the British Army were now considered fit to hold back lines. In answer to questions as to the location of the other American Divisions, the Director of Military Operations stated that twelve of these were in the line or effectively forming part of the French army, while another five were in various stages of training in rear of the French army.

There was some discussion as to the total effective combatant strength of the American troops in France.

The Prime Minister quoted the figures of our mission at American Headquarters, which gave the total strength on June 26th as 820,000, of which only 271,000 were rifles, or, say 350,000, including machine-guns.

Some doubt was expressed how far General Pershing had, as a matter of fact, carried out the agreement that the troops brought over during the last three months should have been mainly infantry and machine-gunners. It was also suggested that the French, with their not unnatural anxiety for the safety of Paris, were keeping an undue proportion of the American troops behind their own line.

The Prime Minister stated that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had proposed to write a letter to General Foch drawing attention to these points, and more generally, to the overwhelming weight of the attack which the Germans might be able to put against us. He considered that, instead of this letter going to General Foch

from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, it should be a report from the latter to the Imperial War Cabinet and that the Prime Minister should, on behalf of the Imperial War Cabinet, send it himself to General Foch, or alternatively, should write to M. Clemenceau, inviting him to support General Wilson's representation to General Foch. It would be useful in this manner to remind General Foch that he was not merely a French but an Allied Commander-in-Chief, and responsible to the British as well as to the French Government.

The Imperial War Cabinet agreed that :

The Prime Minister should take one of the courses of action suggested.

## XI

With the end of June, 1918, came a sudden relaxation on the part of the British Government of its stubborn insistence as to the manner in which the American troops should be utilized on the Western front. The first indication of this change of attitude to the more cooperative one of assisting General Pershing in the attainment of his objective was exhibited in the British War Office. It was made the purport of a memorandum which the Deputy Director of Military Operations, Colonel Kirke, drew up for the Director of that branch of the Imperial General Staff and which was eventually forwarded to the War Cabinet, at least in substance, though the medium of the office of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

D.M.O.

AMERICAN ARMY.

If we are right in supposing that the main obstacle to the rapid expansion of the American Army will be one of equipment, there are two ways in which we could help to increase the Allied forces in the field:

(a) By continued incorporation of American infantry in our divisions.

(b) By handing over equipment as our divisions are reduced to the Americans.

From the Prime Minister's remarks on the A. G.'s (Adjutant General's) man-power memorandum (G.T.4679), the intention appears to be to replace British Infantry by American Infantry. This policy was perfectly legitimate during the crises, but has never actually been realized in the case of the British divisions, and the arguments for doing so are diminishing in force. The Americans have seen recently that their untrained troops have more fighting value than veteran French divisions, and they have formed the opinion that their Staff arrangements also are as good, if not better, than those of their mentors. They naturally consider that the time is rapidly approaching when they will be fit to operate as an American Army, and all their efforts are concentrated on achieving that object. It is no more use our trying to keep them back in our divisions than it would be to try to prevent a young man of independent means from getting married when he has made up his mind to do so. I think, therefore, we should do ourselves far more harm than good in continuing to insist on the retention of American infantry when General Pershing is ready to receive them. We shall only embitter relations without achieving anything.

Of the two alternatives it is suggested that we should

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adopt the second, namely, to make it quite clear to General Pershing that we intend in every way possible to assist him in forming his Army, and will gladly hand over any equipment which we can spare as our own divisions are reduced in number.

(Sgd.) W. KIRKE,  
D.D.M.O.

28/6/18

In forwarding this memorandum to the Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff the Director of Military Operations placed the following endorsement thereon:

D.C.I.G.S.

I agree with the above views. It is no use our trying to force General Pershing's hand. It is quite possible that a little later on the Americans may find they want some help from us in training, but the request must come from them.

It was but natural that there should exist some elation amongst the American troops at the success of their initial ventures during the months of May, June and early July, along the active sectors of the battlefield. Due also to the psychological reaction from the restraint of non-participation in the combat during the long periods of grinding training behind the line, this feeling might have accentuated itself, in some instances into open assertion that, at last having been given opportunity to



fight beside their Allied brethren, the right of the American troops, in consequence of the performance they exhibited, to be considered of equal value as fighting material had been effectively established. It is hardly likely, however, that the American G.H.Q. ever indicated any conviction on its part that "their untrained troops had more fighting value than veteran French Divisions," and arrived at the conclusion that its Staff arrangements "were better than those of their mentors."

There was always to be borne in mind, moreover, insofar as American Staff organization and functioning were concerned, that the composition and strength of the American Division differed vastly from those of the French and British Divisions.

At the same time the behavior of all engaged—Command, Staff and Line—in the defenses of Seichpray, in the Vosges, in the attacks at Cantigny, Vaux, Belleau Wood and at the bridge of Château-Thierry, attested appealingly to the fact that the formation of an American Army, capable of exploiting itself worthily in combat, had ceased to be a matter of indefinite conjecture and was intruding itself forcibly as an undertaking of early possibility.

Indeed the reality was not far distant.



PART III  
THE ACHIEVEMENT



## PART III

### THE ACHIEVEMENT

#### I

THERE is little remaining to be recounted from alien sources of the events during July and August, 1918, that befell the American Expeditionary Force in the process of its moulding into the First American Army. Other than the repetition of our own statistical strength reports, orders and communiques, or extracts therefrom, such messages as were exchanged between General Wagstaff at our G.H.Q. and the British War Office were irregular in the sending and were of value mainly in marking the important stages of progress in the formation of that Army. Before extracting the more significant of General Wagstaff's dispatches it might be well to review, even though sketchily, the conditions on the Western front in the summer months of 1918 that affected the movements and training of the American Divisions.

By the end of June, 1918, the policy regulating the employment of the American troops with the French and British Armies, which had been approved by the

Supreme War Council at its Versailles meeting of June 1st, was in full course of application. Supervision of its execution rested entirely in the hands of General Foch, although the Generalissimo unfailingly conferred with the American Commander-in-Chief in regard to all details relating thereto and deferred, as a rule, to the latter's desires. Based on the general principle of the progressive development of the American Divisions as rapidly as possible in order that the early existence of an American Army might be realized, the working out of the policy in actual practice may be said to have consisted of two phases.

The first phase comprised the period devoted to preliminary instruction in the training area followed by a tour of duty in the trenches. During this period, the American units when found, after tactical inspection and field test, to be sufficiently prepared, entered the front line sectors at first by battalions, forming part of French or British Divisions. Such inclusion was temporary and for training purposes only. While attached in this fashion the battalions were, of course, subject to the orders of the French or British higher Commanders into whose commands they had been introduced, and participated jointly with the other elements of such commands in whatever operations were to be carried out. After the completion of these tours the three battalions of a particular regiment were joined together with the other component units of that regiment and a regimental experience



of a similar nature ensued. Ultimately the regiments were re-assembled in designated localities into their own divisions again.

The second phase began with the division ready, as an integral whole—save in the cases where the arrival of its artillery brigade from the United States had been delayed—to occupy a sector of the line under the direct command of its own Divisional Commander and with its own Divisional Staff and Headquarters functioning completely. Whilst so engaged, whether in defensive or offensive operations, it was intended that the divisions would be gradually grouped into appropriate Army Corps under their own Corps Commanders, and with their own Corps Staffs and Corps troops. During this period General Foch had made it clear that, as the Generalissimo of the Allied forces, he reserved the prerogative to make such temporary use of the Divisions, naturally with the co-operation of General Pershing, as the exigencies of the tactical or strategical situations demanded. He exercised this prerogative on more than one occasion, notably in the instance of the transfer of the five American divisions from Sir Douglas Haig's command; again in the movement of the 1st American Division from the Seichpray sector to the Picardy front, northwest of Montdidier, with the resultant capture of Cantigny by that Division in the last days of May, 1918; and yet again in the allotment of the sector to the northwest of Lucy-le-Bocage, on the Paris-Metz road, to the 2nd Ameri-

can Division with the mission of capturing and holding Belleau Wood.

The pressure caused by the extensive drive of the Germans on the Marne in the early part of July forced the modification of these phases of the original policy in rather drastic fashion. The 3rd American Division was the first to undergo actually the new ordeal,—an experience that it passed through with splendid distinction. At that time in its training area at Châteauvillain, it was rushed forward, before it had entered upon its elementary trench baptism, to the bridge at Château-Thierry and took over the sector along the Marne river between Dormans and Jaulgonne.

When the attacks of the Germans had spent the greater vitality of their strength, General Foch counter attacked on a twenty-five mile front in the direction of Soissons, employing the 1st and 2nd American Divisions with the French Foreign Legion Division to penetrate the German lines to a distance of five miles and to regain completely the salient that had been made in the Marne sector by the hostile advance. Renewed vigor began to animate the efforts of the Allies along the entire battle front. Thereafter, in accord with this spirit of aggressiveness, the newly arriving American divisions, upon the completion of their training in the rear areas, did not any more pass through the battalion and regimental stages of trench duty, but were sent intact, as divisions, directly into the line for their début, though usually into what were known as the



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THE GENERALISSIMO OF THE ALLIES BIDS FAREWELL TO THE AMERICAN  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

aboard the U.S.S. *Leviathan*, in the harbor at Brest, just before the General  
of the Armies of the United States sails for home, having completed his great  
mission in France.



“quiet” or comparatively inactive sectors of the Vosges and the vicinity.

Throughout July and August, therefore, the activities of the American divisions are to be found expended intermittently along the entire battle front as well as in the training areas of the Zone of the Interior. Constantly moved hither and thither, like the pieces on a checkerboard, with the changing vicissitudes of the conflict, the logistical account of the life of the American Expeditionary Force during these two months is tremendously interesting. All the while the number of arrivals from the United States was daily increasing and the total of trained divisions was gradually attaining the complement desirable for the strength and composition of an American Army.

## II

In a “Monthly Summary of the A.E.F.,” dated July 1, 1918, General Wagstaff furnished the British War Office with data relative to the strength of the A.E.F. on that date;

1. <i>Rifle Strength:</i>	<i>Ration Strength:</i>
1st January . . . . 54,000	1st January . . . . 160,000
1st February . . . . 57,000	1st February . . . 215,556
1st March . . . . . 64,000	1st March . . . . . 245,000
1st April . . . . . 75,000	1st April . . . . . 319,737
1st May . . . . . 117,000	1st May . . . . . 431,959
1st June . . . . . 215,000	1st June . . . . . 601,243
26th June . . . . . 271,000	26th June . . . . . 820,000

2. On 1st January there were four and a half Divisions in France; there are on 1st July, twenty-one Divisions. Owing to the agreement between the Allies to bring over American Infantry of the 2nd and 3rd Corps before their Artillery, the arrival of the latter with their divisions in the line has been delayed.

Some of these divisions had seen active service, some were undergoing their first trench experiences, some were engaged in the progressive stages of training in the back areas, and some had just completed their arrival on French soil. One—the 41st Division—had been designated as a Depot Division to supply the personnel needs of various establishments within the Zone of the Interior as well as the Zone of the Armies. Subsequently the scheme of Depot Divisions for this purpose was abandoned.

On July 8th, General H. Rawlinson, Commanding the Fourth British Army, wrote in part as follows to the British G.H.Q.:—

1. In order to avoid the possibility of any recurrence of the difficulties that arose with regard to the employment of American troops on the 4th July, I would request that I may be given a definite ruling as to their employment in active operations during the period of their attachment in the line to units of III and Australian Corps. . . .

The episode of the 4th of July, to which General Rawlinson made reference, was the demonstrative



celebration which the American troops, who were in the British front lines on that day, had staged to apprise the enemy of the advent of their national holiday. The affair may or may not have occurred with the knowledge of the immediate higher British Commanders involved, but it had its conception and desire of execution amongst the American troops themselves.

The reply of Lieutenant General H. A. Lawrence, the Chief of the General Staff British G.H.Q., is significant in its clear-cut adherence to the Versailles policy regarding the employment of the American units;—

During the attachment of American troops to British units in the line, the American troops will act as integral parts of the British units to which they are attached and may, therefore, carry out any operations which these units may from time to time be called upon to perform. American troops should, however, in no case be especially attached to any British unit or formation for the express purpose of taking part in active operations.<sup>1</sup>

In a weekly report, dated July 27, 1918, General Wagstaff notified the British War Office that:—

. . . . .  
The First Army is in process of formation.

No Commander has been appointed.

Lieutenant Colonel Drum from the Operations Section G. H. Q., has been appointed Chief of Staff First Army.

<sup>1</sup> This "special attachment" was the form that the "4th of July celebration" had taken.

General Wagstaff referred more particularly here to the organization of the First Army Headquarters, which he described as "being established" at La Ferte sous Jouarre, rather than to the body of the Army itself.

The diversified activities of the American Divisions during July, 1918, were concisely summarized by General Wagstaff in the report on "Movements of American Divisions" which he rendered to the British War Office at the end of that month:—

*1st Division.* From rest at Nivellers, took part in the counter-offensive east of Villers-Cotterets from July 15th to 23rd under American III Corps. On July 28th it moved to vicinity of Toul by rail and is now resting near Toul, with headquarters at Gondreville.

*2nd Division.* From rest at Chamigny, took part in the counter-offensive east of Villers-Cotterets from July 17th to 20th under American III Corps. It is now at rest near Toul, with headquarters at Nancy.

*3rd Division.* Took part in the counter-offensive driving the Germans north across the Marne between Château-Thierry and Dormans. It was in action for 29 days during July under American I Corps.

*4th Division.* Has been in reserve since July 13th in the neighborhood of Villers-Cotterets under American III Corps. It is now in reserve French Sixth Army, with headquarters at Château-Thierry.

*26th Division.* Was in action from July 6th to 25th under American I Corps in neighborhood west of Château-Thierry and is now in reserve French Sixth Army, with headquarters at Mery-sur-Marne.

*28th Division.* Was in action since July 21st. The 56th Brigade under American I Corps, the 55th Brigade under the French XXXVIII Corps in the neighborhood northeast of Château-Thierry. Is now in line, French Sixth Army, with headquarters at Jaulgonne.

*32nd Division.* Was in line east of Belfort until 20th July, when it moved to the battle front and is now in line northeast of Château-Thierry under American I Corps, with headquarters at Le Carmel.

*42nd Division.* Held second line of defense on front of French XXI Corps, Fourth French Army, Northwest Chalons, from July 5th to 18/19 during the German offensive in Champagne. It moved to the vicinity of Château-Thierry and went into action under American I Corps on July 25th and has been fighting in that vicinity ever since.

*29th Division.* Relieved the 32nd Division on July 20th and is now in line in Gap of Belfort, with headquarters at Montreux, near Grandvillars.

*37th Division.* Will shortly relieve the 77th in the Baccarat Sector. It is now in the vicinity of Baccarat, with headquarters at that place.

*77th Division.* Is in line in the Toul Sector, to be relieved shortly by the 37th Division and sent to the battle front. It is under the American IV Corps.

*82nd Division.* Is in the line north of Toul, with headquarters at Lucey.

*5th Division.* Is in line on the Alsace front.

*35th Division.* Is in line on the Alsace front.

*Divisions in Training.* Advanced stage, the 89th, 90th and 92nd. Commencing training, the 6th, 79th and 91st.

*Depot Divisions.* 41st, 76th, 83rd and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 85th.

*Divisions on the Sea.* 36th and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 85th.

*Divisions with the British.* 27th, 30th, 33rd, 78th and 80th.

## III

On August 16th, Sir Douglas Haig wrote to General Foch stating that he had received a "private letter" from General Pershing in which the latter informed the British Commander-in-Chief that three of the five American Divisions, then with the British Forces, would be required by the American Commander-in-Chief in order to carry out a "special mission" that had been directed by the Generalissimo. Sir Douglas Haig concluded his letter thus:—

" . . . I shall be glad to be informed as early as possible if you wish this transfer to be carried out.

In the event of your assenting to this proposal I request that, before these troops leave the British area, the line now held by my troops be diminished by at least the front of three strong divisions, say 18,000 yards—otherwise it will be impossible for me to continue the operations which you wish me to carry out.

Notwithstanding the protest of Sir Douglas Haig three American divisions (the 33rd, 78th and 80th) were transferred from the British area to General Pershing's direct command. In a "Note" of a conference between Marshal Foch and Mr. Bacon, however, which was sent to Sir Douglas Haig by Major General Weygand, in the name of Marshal Foch, the British Commander-in-Chief was informed that "it had been decided" that the 27th and

30th American Divisions, actually remaining in the British Zone, could be employed as Sir Douglas Haig saw fit in the offensive operations that were to be undertaken by the British after August 31st. The "Note" of General Weygand was dated August 24th. Sir Douglas Haig replied on August 27th and after pointing out the satisfactory development of the situation between the Scarpe and the Somme on the British front and the especially favorable opportunity to pierce the enemy's line between Drocourt and Queant, immediately south of the Scarpe, he continued:—

In order to exploit the present favorable situation I am strongly of opinion that it is very desirable that American divisions should take an active share in the battle without delay, and I beg to submit for your consideration that they should be so distributed as to admit of a concentric movement being made on Cambrai, on St. Quentin, and from the south upon Mezieres.

Here the reference of Sir Douglas Haig to "American Divisions" extended generically to all the divisions of the American Expeditionary Force rather than merely to the 27th and 30th Divisions, that, having been formed into the II American Corps, were henceforth to fight in the British Armies. The British Commander-in-Chief was discussing the strategy, that in his opinion, should underlie the combined offensives of the Allies which General Foch was contemplating. Sir Douglas Haig's suggested plan of "a concentric movement"

to be made on Cambrai, on St. Quentin and *from the south upon Mezieres*, was to have an important influence on the later operations of the American Expeditionary Force as may be determined from Sir Douglas Haig's own account of a meeting he had at Mouchy-le-Chatel with General Foch two days after he had written the letter:—

Thursday, 29th August, 1918.

I met Marshal Foch at Mouchy-le-Chatel today. He stated that he fully agreed with me as to the objectives to be aimed at by the Allied Armies.

As regards the American Army, he had decided to give it a different objective\* to the one for which General Pershing was now preparing.

I considered that this arrangement is highly satisfactory.

\* I.e. Mezieres.<sup>1</sup>

(Intd.) D. H.

<sup>1</sup> The proposed offensive under discussion was of course, in so far as the American troops were concerned, the Meuse-Argonne operations. Sir Douglas Haig's suggestion, that the American divisions be employed *without delay*, must have exerted some influence in converting Marshal Foch to the idea of the St. Mihiel offensive, which had long appealed to General Pershing because of the experience it would bring to his newly formed Army, but which had lacked enthusiastic reception on the part of the Generalissimo since it offered little material advantage of strategical value in the latter's estimation. Following this conference, the famous "Directive" of Marshal Foch, dated September 3, 1918, was issued. It prescribed in substance for the First American Army a twofold mission; firstly the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient, secondly a general offensive in the direction of Mezieres to gain the region of Mezieres and break down the resistance on the Aisne.



## IV

The assembly of his divisions by General Pershing for the physical creation of his Army had begun. On August 24th General Wagstaff reported to the British War Office that the First Army Headquarters was established at Neufchâteau but as yet had "no tactical control over divisions in the line." This qualifying statement merely confirmed the fact that no definite sector of the line had been occupied by the First Army as such. Hence those American Divisions actually engaged at this time in front line fighting remained quite properly under the tactical control of the high command of the French and British sectors in which they were serving. The report showed further the progressive organization of the Army Corps that were to constitute the First Army, including the divisions that formed the component parts of these Corps:—

*The I Corps* has moved to Saizerais and has taken over the 42nd, 82nd and 90th Divisions; *the V Corps* has moved to Ligny-en-Barrois during week ending August 23rd and has taken over the 5th, 33rd, 78th, 80th and 3rd Divisions; *the VI Corps* remains at Bourbonne and has control of the training of the 6th, 26th, 36th, 79th and 91st Divisions; *the VII Corps* has been formed and taken over from the V Corps at Remiremont the 29th, 92nd and 35th Divisions.

*The 1st Division* has been relieved by the 90th Division and gone to rest.

*The 2nd Division* has been relieved by the 82nd Division and gone to rest.

On August 30th, General Wagstaff reported the Headquarters of the First Army as being located at Ligny-en-Barrois and as still possessing no tactical control of Divisions in the line. He gave a detailed list of the existing Corps and Divisions of the A.E.F.<sup>1</sup> showing the locations, movements and activities of all on that date.

Some of the divisions were in process of moving to their rendezvous areas under the First Army command. For the great concentration of American troops was well under way. By rail, by camion, by marching, the huge masses of men were surging to assembly points in the woods to the northwest to the west to the south and to the southeast of the St. Mihiel salient. During the nights of the first week of September the roads leading to the salient were filled with almost continuous columns of troops and trains marching and counter-marching in the darkness. During the days the damp woods and small French villages, en route, were congested with their bivouacs, concealed as effectively as possible from the searching observation of hostile aerial reconre.

By the night of September 11th, approximately 600,000 men were echeloned in battle formation on a forty mile front from Chatillon-les-Cotes to les Eparges, to St. Mihiel, to Xivray, to Seichpray, and eastward along the plains of the Woivre to Pont-a-Musson on the Moselle. In the early hours of the morning of September 12th, after the artillery

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix No. 18.

fire of three thousand guns of all calibres had blasted the enemy's positions for four hours with devastating intensity, fourteen American Divisions, united in effort at last, leapt forward to drive the enemy from Mont Sec and to reduce the salient that for nearly three years had pierced the lines of the Allies.

It was the consummation.

An American Army had been born.



PART IV  
THE APPENDICES





## APPENDIX NO. I

(The enclosure that accompanied Mr. Lloyd George's letter to Lord Reading, dated December 2, 1917, and which was to be delivered by Lord Reading to Colonel House in Paris.)

Obviously Germany has a better chance of winning the war before America can exert her full strength than she will have after. It follows that she may try to win it during the next eight months or so. I believe she will. Russia's defection enables her greatly to strengthen her forces on the West or Italian front, or on both, and to try and get the decision. Italy will be very weak for months to come; the man-power of France is rapidly diminishing; we cannot see our way to keeping our divisions even approximately up to strength throughout the next Summer, especially if there is heavy fighting this Winter, which will probably be the German game, while America requires several months before she can put an appreciable force of *Divisions* into the field.

Would America therefore be ready to help in another way, as a temporary measure? When she first came into the war we hoped she might send some men for inclusion in the British Armies, as being clearly the quickest way of helping, but for reasons we quite understand, she preferred to retain her national identity. No doubt she still desires to do so, but over and above the preparation of

her divisions, and without interfering with it, would it be possible for her to provide a company of infantry to replace a British company in such number of British battalions as America could bring over the men. Even 100 such companies would be of the greatest value. Every consideration would of course be given to the companies, and if desired they could later be recalled and posted to the American divisions. It is thought that this mingling of American and British troops would establish a close and cordial feeling between the two Armies, and would also give the American troops useful training. If this system is not possible would America find a battalion to replace a British battalion in as many brigades as possible? There would be no insuperable difficulty in meeting American wishes in any such matters as discipline, rations and general maintenance. The only difficulty is American national sentiment, which we quite understand. On the other hand, the system suggested is clearly one which would the most rapidly afford much needed help during, perhaps, the most critical period of the war.

2/12/17.

(NOTE: The memorandum is marked "Secret," but is otherwise typed on plain paper without heading or signature.—The Author.)

## APPENDIX NO. 2

(The letter from Sir William Robertson to Sir Douglas Haig, enclosing the copies of the Lloyd George letter to Reading and of the memorandum for presentation to Colonel House by Lord Reading.)

6th December, 1917.

MY DEAR HAIG:

The enclosed may interest you. It has been given by Lord Reading to Colonel House, who received it very favorably. Much depends though, upon what Bliss and Pershing have to say on the subject whom House has not seen. I hope you will see no great crab in the proposal. No doubt there are objections to it, but none which seem sufficient to override the necessity of our getting as many men as we can. I doubt very much whether the proposal will really be accepted, and in any case it will probably take some months to materialize.

I am putting your paper regarding the extension of front before the War Cabinet and hope they will back up what you say. I think they will.

The Versailles people<sup>1</sup> are getting very busy and are calling for all sorts of information. I am afraid that

<sup>1</sup>I. e., the Supreme War Council which sat at Versailles to co-ordinate the Allied efforts.

254 IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST!

they will prove a great nuisance, but we must make the best of them and see that they do not get into mischief.

Believe me,

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) W. R. ROBERTSON.

### APPENDIX NO. 3

(The detailed amplification of Sir Douglas Haig's "scheme" as set forth in the communication of his Deputy Chief of Staff to Brigadier General Wagstaff, Chief of the British Mission at the A. E. F. Headquarters at Chaumont. It was probably written about December 10, 1917, in view of the reference to General Bliss's "visit" and the date of General Wagstaff's telegraphic reply, although no date or signature appears on the copy of the document in the Official Files.)

DEAR WAGSTAFF :

While I was away at Chaumont, General Bliss visited the Chief (Sir Douglas Haig) here at G.H.Q. At this meeting the possibility of utilizing the British Armies in France for expediting the forming of American divisions was discussed, and General Bliss informed the Chief that he would write to General Pershing on the matter. We do not know whether General Pershing has yet heard from General Bliss on the subject, but every day is of great importance, and in order to avoid any delay the Chief wishes you to discuss the proposals with General Pershing, and hopes that if he is prepared to give them favorable consideration it may be possible for General Pershing to come over here and stay with the Chief for a night to discuss them further, and, if possible, arrive at a

definite arrangement, which could subsequently be worked out in detail by the respective staffs.

As you know, the situation at the present time is such that we have at present a very great shortage of Infantry, which is likely to last for some time. Thus, it seems that it would be a sound arrangement from every point of view to use our Divisions who have their organization in other respects complete, for the rapid training of American Infantry Battalions and Brigades, which, as they become trained, could be formed into complete American Divisions. Similarly, as might be convenient to General Pershing, the American Staffs of formations to be subsequently formed could be duplicated with our Staffs in those Divisions in which the American Infantry were training, and subsequently the American Staffs could gradually take over command of their own formations as they were formed. Similar arrangements could also be made with the Artillery.

There are many ways by which the desired result might be achieved. In fact it could be done in any way that General Pershing liked. Two simple ways of carrying out the proposal are shown on the attached diagram. Briefly, the system suggested would be to attach an American regiment to a British Division, one battalion of the regiment being in the first instance attached to each brigade for a period. At the end of this period, the three battalions in each regiment would be collected, reformed into a regiment, and replace an Infantry Brigade in the British Division,<sup>1</sup> the process being repeated until a

<sup>1</sup> The British Infantry Brigade consisted of three battalions, each approximately equal, when filled, to the strength of an A.E.F. Infantry battalion, so that the American regiment of three battalions corresponded to the British brigade.



second regiment was formed, when the American brigade and staff would take command of the two regiments, and so on until finally the American divisional commander and a staff assumed command of the division.

There are several alternative ways by which this could be done, but it would seem best that no unit smaller than a battalion should be dealt with, all administration, feeding, transport, ammunition, etc., being supplied by us until such time as General Pershing wished to take over this responsibility in whole or in part for the American Divisions.

Further, there are many reasons which I need not touch on in this letter, which indicate the great advisability of close co-operation between the American and British Forces and further indicate that the proper position of the American Forces is on our own right, i. e., between the British and French. This is very delicate ground, but I have already discussed this matter personally with General Pershing and General Bliss discussed it with the Chief at his visit the other day.

The proposals outlined above which are at present put forward with a view to expediting the putting of the American Forces in the field, however, fall exactly into line with what is at the back of our mind, though you quite understand that this is not for the ear of anyone except General Pershing himself. With this in view, arrangements would be made for the American Divisions to be trained and formed on the right of the British Area, and the necessary facilities for concentration camps, etc., would be arranged with a view to the American Divisions being subsequently based on Havre and Rouen.

The larger ships which it is understood are likely to be put into commission for the transport of American troops

will carry them to Southampton, and they will subsequently be transferred to Havre, and so, in natural sequence, with the least delay and less strain on the railways, could form the divisions on the right of our line.

It is quite possible, as you are aware, that there may be certain difficulties with the French, if it came to the question of the American Divisions taking over a portion of the British line, but there would possibly be less difficulty if they were taking over from the French, but in prolongation of the British line.

The question is one of some considerable urgency. It is vital to all parties that the American Forces should get into the field as soon as possible, and that every way that we can help to expedite this should be done. Apart from this, the French, as you know, are pressing very strongly for us to extend our line and take over a portion of their line as they wish to concentrate more to the south. The long and continual struggle in which our troops have been engaged this year, and the present depletion of our troops due to the general man-power situation at the moment, makes it impossible for us to meet the French in the way they wish. It seems, therefore, that the proposals outlined above, if put into immediate effect, might at this juncture be more readily agreed to by the French, as, apart from other considerations, it would, as soon as the American Divisions were formed, enable the French to shorten the length of their line.

As soon as you have read this carefully please call me up on the telephone and let me know if you thoroughly understand the idea, and are in a position to return at once to Chaumont and place the proposals before General Pershing.

You will understand that I did not speak to you on

the telephone at length on this subject, as it was inadvisable to discuss the matter in extent through the French telephone exchange.

Please explain to General Pershing that the Chief is only approaching him through you by means of this letter, as at the moment he is extremely busy, and for the same reason neither the C.G.S. or myself are able to get away to come and see him personally.

(NOTE: The "attached diagrams" referred to in the earlier part of the letter, are omitted, as they are merely explanatory of the American Army Organization and illustrate graphically the plan set forth in the body of the communication.—THE AUTHOR.)

## APPENDIX NO. 4

(The translation of the "Summary of French Notes on the American Army," prepared by the French General Staff at the beginning of 1918.)

### *Translation.*

#### STATE OF AMERICAN ARMY ON 1ST JANUARY, 1918.

The American Army consists at present of 44 divisions of 27,000 men each situated as follows:

- 39 in course of organization in the United States.
- 4 under instruction in camps in France.
- 1 disembarking in France.

These divisions belong either to the Regular Army, the National Guard or the National Army. Of the 39 divisions still in the United States, 8 are Regular Army, 15 National Guard and 16 National Army. Of the 5 divisions in France, 2 are Regular Army (1st and 2nd), and 3 are National Guard (26th, 41st and 42nd).

### *Characteristics of the Three Parts of the American Army.*

(a) Regular Army (300,000 men). This is the peace army recruited by voluntary enlistment. This army, which consisted before the war of about 30 infantry regiments and 6 regiments of artillery, has been more than

doubled during 1917, so these units include at present an enormous proportion of recruits, also their cadres have been weakened by numerous transfers to the National Guard and National Army. In spite of this these units have kept their traditions of discipline and appear capable of acquiring quickly the flexibility necessary for fighting. Neglected to some extent during the last few months, the Regular Army is now again engaging the attention of the Government. The organization of the divisions has begun; 10 or possibly 11 will be formed.

(b) National Guard (425,000 men). This is the militia of the time of peace. In principle the militia includes all citizens from 18 to 45 years of age capable of bearing arms, but in practice it is reduced to about 125,000 men, called up for short periods of training. Increased now to a strength of 425,000, partly by means of voluntary enlistment and partly by conscription, the militia furnishes in the National Guard the cadres of about 20 divisions. The units of the National Guard suffer from want of discipline, due to political influences, also they are recruited chiefly from men employed in banks or trade whose physique is only mediocre. If the organization of these units has been pushed forward more actively than that of the Regular Army or National Army, it has only been for political interests and from the need of interesting in the war certain states which were rather indifferent to it.

(c) National Army (500,000 men). The National Army is the new American Army recruited by conscription from all classes. It possesses excellent qualities. It has regular officers in command of regiments, brigades and divisions, and in the lower ranks young officers recently from camps of instruction and of the right spirit.

Thus the divisions of the National Army are of better quality than the divisions of the National Guard.

*State of Instruction in the United States.*

Reports on the state of organization of the 39 divisions still in the United States are few and incomplete. The state of instruction varies. On the whole it appears to be as follows:

(1) Infantry. Individual training began about 1st November. The training of small units is now proceeding.

(2) Artillery. Training has scarcely commenced on account of the want of both material and instructors.

(3) Officers. Staff officers are very few. The training of new staff officers can only be done in France. Regimental officers are still wanting in knowledge and experience. In addition to a small number of professional officers (6,000 officers of the Regular Army), there are 40,000 young officers of the reserve recently formed and who need a complete training.

To sum up, the state of instruction in the United States is not brilliant in spite of the efforts made during the last 8 months to improve it. The causes which have retarded progress are as follows:

(1) The want of a qualified chief invested with the necessary powers at the head of the Committee of Instruction of the War College.

(2) Want of a directing staff, particularly a directing staff for artillery.

(3) Insufficiency or bad distribution of material for instruction.

(4) Want of Instructors, and particularly of American instructors.



*Improvements Carried Out or Proposed.*

General Morrison has just been appointed President of the Committee of Training. He is considered one of the best American Generals, so the higher direction of training appears to have been arranged for.

The principle of sending divisional artilleries in advance to France has been agreed to. Nothing seems to have been decided with regard to heavy artillery. As regards the Infantry, the sending of material for instruction and additional French instructors has been proposed to the War College. This seems to be the solution to which the attention of the Government and the American high command should be directed.

It is also very important that the French command should draw up in co-operation with the American command a general scheme for the transport, organization, training and employment of the American Army in order to utilize to the best advantage the French resources in personnel and material, which it is decided to place at the disposal of our Allies in the United States or in France.

*State of American Army in France.*

1st Division (Fighting division). Completely assembled (artillery, infantry, engineers and auxiliary services) at the camp De Gondrecourt, where it is finishing its training with the assistance of the 69th French Division. It will go into the line in the Woevre about the 15th January.

26th Division (Fighting division). Infantry, engineers and auxiliary services complete under instruction at the camp De Neufchateau. Artillery complete under instruction at camp De Coetquidam. Training of the

infantry units and artillery units terminated about the beginning of January. No arrangements have been made yet regarding its taking over a sector of the line.

2nd Division (Training division). Infantry, engineers and services almost complete, but dispersed into detachments for work in camps, schools, bases and on the lines of communication. These dispersed units will be relieved gradually and concentrated as soon as the 41st (depot division) has completed its disembarkation. The artillery of the 2nd Division is assembling at Valdahon.

42nd Division (Fighting division). Infantry, engineers and services complete in the Langres area. Artillery complete being trained at the camp De Coetquidam.

41st Division (Depot division). Disembarking. The artillery of this division will form Army heavy artillery (one brigade 155's). It will be trained at the camp De Souge.

Besides the above divisions of the 1st American Corps, the following American troops have disembarked:

(1) A brigade of coast artillery of 3 regiments, now at the camp De Mailly, which will be formed into army heavy artillery.

(2) An aviation squadron fully equipped with personnel and material and 2,000 pilots under training.

(3) A regiment of cavalry.

(4) Six regiments of railway engineers, one at the disposal of the French Commander-in-Chief, employed in the Verdun area, and 5 others on the American line of communications.

(5) Numerous medical units.

(6) Labor units (dockers forestry men, etc.).

On January 1st the American effective strength in France was as follows:

Combatants .....	100,000
Non-combatants .....	50,000
Total .....	150,000

On October 1st the total which had disembarked was 60,000, therefore in three months 90,000 have been transported, or an average of 30,000 per month (a strong American division).

*Disposal of Americans on Arrival.*

The programme for the reception of the Americans on arrival requires :

(1) The preparation of about 12 divisional areas in the zone of the armies (area Chaumont-Neufchâteau-Langres).

(2) Four Artillery camps, Le Valdehon (one divisional artillery), Coetquidam, Souge, Meucon (2 divisional artilleries each). These are actually constructed except Meucon, which will be finished by the 1st February.

(3) The camp De La Courtine.

(4) A certain number of divisional areas in the interior proposed to General Pershing for his depot divisions and able to be placed at his disposal if circumstances require it.

Besides these camps and divisional areas the American Army possesses a number of schools.

(1) Artillery School at Saumur. Students 500 officers, 200 N.C.O.'s.

(2) American Aviation Schools at Issoudun, Tours, Aulnat (bombing).

(3) American Army Schools at Langres (Staff, Infantry, etc.).

*General Method of Training.*

Up to now the French and American commands had agreed to 3 stages of instruction for divisions arriving:

(1) Instruction by arms in the camps. Infantry in the camps in the Army area; Artillery in the Artillery camps.

(2) Training of American units in the line with the French division (by regiments and by groups), minimum period one month.

(3) Training of complete divisions in one camp, minimum period one month.

The French Commander-in-Chief considers that in view of the present military situation the problem of the training of the Americans cannot be considered in the same form as 6 months ago. A solution must be found which will ensure the rapid training of units while beginning to employ them. The following procedure should be adopted. A French division should receive at the same time a regiment of infantry and one or two groups of artillery already partially trained. The French division would take charge of their training. These would ultimately be regrouped into American divisions.

*Armament.*

The provision for the American Army in guns and ammunition is assured by the French until the time when America can produce the munitions she requires. The two tables given below show the quantities of artillery material ordered in France, United States and England for the American Army, the deliveries already affected by the French, and the probable dates of delivery of material manufactured in the United States. It should be noted that the forecasts of the delivery of material manufac-

tured in the United States will certainly not be realized. The American Government has not yet definitely adopted the 75 mm. type. A minimum delay in delivery of 5 months is from that moment certain in so far as concerns the 75 mm. As regards the 155 mm. howitzers and guns, the last reports received show that manufacture in the United States is going well. The first 155 howitzers should be issued in April, and the first 155 guns soon after.

*Guns Manufactured in the United States.*

Dates of de-

livery as originally estimated	75 mm.	4.7	155 gun.	155 How.	How.
			G.P.F.	Schneider 8"	
1st January	794	9	48	160	45
1st April	2,098	111	68	473	35
1st July	3,008	371	243	1,131	

*Guns Manufactured in France.*

Type	Ordered	Delivered on 20th Dec.
75 mm. ....	620	240
155 How. Schneider.....	260	115
155 Gun G.P.F.....	48	12

*Guns Purchased in England.*

Type	Ordered	Probable
8" How. ....	48	date of deliv-
9.2" How. ....	12	ery not known

*Transport of American Army to France.*

The monthly rate of American divisions transported can only be determined when the whole shipping problem has been solved in its entirety. At present the staff has received no definite information on this question.

The report of the Inter-Allied Conference of the 3rd December only stated that the Allies have decided to establish an Inter-Allied Organization to draw up a general programme constantly up to date and allowing imports to be restricted and organized in order to free tonnage for the transport of American troops.<sup>1</sup> Although the staff has not been in touch with the work of this organization, it seems that the rate of transport of the American Army should be kept between the following limits—minimum rate of arrival, 2 divisions per month, maximum rate of arrival 4 divisions per month.

<sup>1</sup> Reference is here made to the decision of the Inter-Allied Conference which had been emphasized in M. Clemenceau's letter of December 6th, 1917, to Colonel House.



## APPENDIX NO. 5

(The complete paper of General Wagstaff on the proposed location of the American Army, as found in the files of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff of the British War Office.)

### NOTES ON THE POSITION IN LINE TO BE TAKEN UP BY THE AMERICAN ARMY

1. From a general review of the question it would appear that the best front for the American Army is between the left of the French Army and the right of the British. The considerations which lead to this conclusion are dealt with in the following paragraphs.

2. The Railway situation renders it almost impossible to maintain the American Army at great distance from the sea.

The chief limitation of the French Railways is the question of locomotives and rolling stock. The situation in this respect, which was never very easy, has been greatly aggravated by the existing necessity for maintaining French and British forces in Italy and by the fact that the British Government is called upon to provide Italy with its minimum requirements of coal, 75 per cent of which must be handled by the Continental railways on account of the shortage of tonnage. The

Americans moreover have been unable as yet, to bring any rolling stock to this country; their growing demands must therefore, be met from French and British resources. Any measure, therefore, that can be taken to reduce the demands of the American Army for rolling stock is of great importance.

The Americans have, it is understood, been given port accommodations by the French at Bordeaux, Nantes and St. Nazaire; port accommodation on the Gironde river is also being prepared, while Brest is being used for personnel only, as the latter port can accommodate the largest trans-Atlantic ships, though not alongside the quays.

The distance by rail from St. Nazaire, Nantes and Bordeaux to Chaumont, the present Headquarters of the American Army, are approximately as follows:

St. Nazaire to Chaumont . . . . .	677 kilometres
Nantes to Chaumont . . . . .	612 kilometres
Bordeaux to Chaumont . . . . .	647 kilometres

Should the American Army take over a front between the French and British Armies with a concentration area in the neighborhood of Creil, the distances would be as follows:

St. Nazaire to Creil . . . . .	544 kilometres
Nantes to Creil . . . . .	490 kilometres
Bordeaux to Creil . . . . .	647 kilometres

In comparing these distances the fact that Creil is much nearer the front line than Chaumont must be taken into consideration, and for this reason it is fair to say that the distance by rail from the above ports to an area about Creil is practically 200 kilometres shorter than the distance from these ports to an area about Chau-

mont. This saving in distance of 400 kilometres (out and back) is a reduction of more than a day in the turn around of wagons.

To put it another way, supposing the American Army will eventually require 3,000 wagons a day (this is half the daily average number used by the British Army in times of active operations) the permanent saving in wagons will be the same, viz., 3,000, which gives an idea of the relief which the shorter lead will afford. To this must be added an equivalent saving in locomotives, coal and staff.

The Railway situation will be still further alleviated, provided the Americans are placed as near as possible to the Northern ports, if it should prove possible for the French to allot some extra accommodations for them at Havre, or if the British Command can at any time pass a part of the American requirements through the ports they (the British) are now using.

It is necessary to realize that the Railway situation is likely to prove a ruling factor in this problem of a choice of a front for the American Army.

3. As the strength of the American Army increases and that of the British and French Armies decreases, it will become necessary for the Americans to extend their front and shorten the line held by both the British and the French; this can best be done by the American Army if it is situated between the British and the French when an extension can be carried out gradually in both directions, without interfering with the unity of command of the American Forces in France.

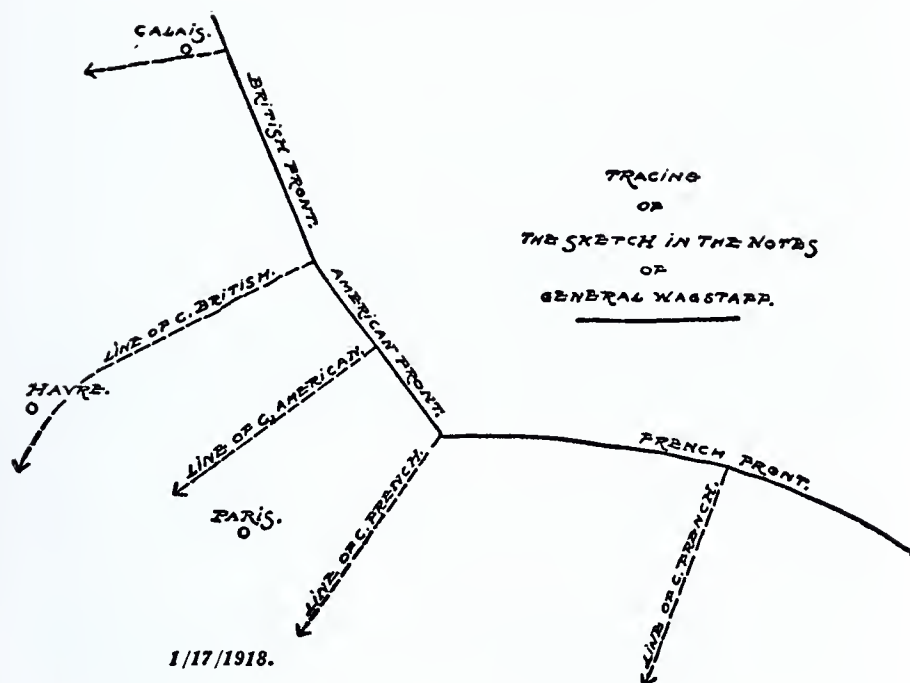
4. As the war goes on, the main offensive will pass to the American Army. The front suggested between the French and the British appears to be particularly

suitable for combined offensive operations by the three Allied Armies on a great scale. Should the enemy on this front be driven back behind the main Mezieres-Hirson-Valenciennes Railway, his armies in the North would then be separated from those in the South by the difficult country of the Ardennes, and an opportunity might thus be created for dealing with each in detail. The French and British Armies on the flanks of the American Army, would, moreover, be well placed to combine in any such offensive operations to the extent of their power. The British and American line of advance would be through Belgium, and that is nearest the sea and to the ports on which they are dependent.

The recapture of Alsace and Lorraine would also by this arrangement fall to the French.

5. Any other arrangement than that suggested in para. 1 would tend to a separation of the Allied Armies in the case of a reverse. In such an eventuality the British must fall back Westwards in order to cover their communications with the Channel ports, while the natural line of retirement for the French would be South and Southwest.

The Americans, if "encadres" with the French Army, would also have to fall back in the same direction and there would be grave danger of a gap being opened between the left of the French and the right of the British. On the other hand by the arrangement proposed in this paper, each Army would be directly covering its proper bases and lines of communication and the danger of a gap in the area between the Somme and the Seine would be guarded against; while any German Army attempting to push through to Paris would find itself in a most dangerous position—see diagram opposite.



## APPENDIX NO. 6

(The letter of General Wagstaff to his friend General Wigham at the British General Headquarters at Abbeville, France.)

13/1/18

*Private*

My dear ———

Jury is coming up instead of myself because (a) my General is not yet back, (b) I am not very well, (c) I can do a good deal here at the moment.

I attach copies of a record of two interviews between the C. I. G. S. and my General. They will explain themselves. There were other private interviews as well, but I understand they were on the same lines. Will you give these back to Jury after you have read them.

The main points, I think, are these :

(1) C. I. G. S. scheme is quite separate from G. H. Q. (British) scheme, though how far the G. H. Q. scheme depends on British shipping, I do not know.

(2) C. I. G. S. will not lend the British ships unless the men are sent in Battalions and not by divisions.

There is still, I think, some confusion about the two schemes, and what I should suggest (if I were asked) is to :

(1) Amalgamate the two schemes, i.e. collar all the



shipping available and pool it, and bring the men to Southampton, Brest and everywhere you can get a berth.

(2) Let the Americans send men by divisions or nominally so, without any equipment or transport. When you have got them here and concentrated in lumps you can use them where and how you like.

I understand that public opinion would never sanction the troops coming near the British unless they leave America as divisions, in which they are now organized. The French would make a great fuss too, and there would be a split.

But having got the men here, it will be possible to use the men in the emergency which will then have arisen, in any way suitable, and probably the best way would be to put infantry battalions into our divisions, use artillerymen as artillery or infantry drafts and engineers as infantry drafts.

Now I make these remarks after a long talk I had today with Logan. I do not know yet what General Pershing has settled to do. I shall see him as soon as I can after his return.

I have great hopes that the Americans are willing to play up and give us all the men we can bring over. So help them out of their country, and to smooth over the French prejudice, (a real difficulty) I think you and the War Office must let them ship men out of America as divisions. They will not mind if the camouflage commanders and staff are done away with on arrival and Britishers take charge.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These and kindred "surmises" are subsequently contradicted by General Wagstaff after he becomes better acquainted with American principles and determination. Explanatory notes in regard to this letter are: "My General" refers, of course, to General Pershing;

This must all be done as camouflage. When the men are here invent the emergency, and use the men. But do not publish a scheme beforehand, such as reducing our divisions and bringing them up with Americans. You can do that at the time but do not say so now.

If you think there is anything in these remarks will you telephone them to Kirke or the D. M. O. at the War Office. I think the crux of whether you get these men or not depends on the use of the word divisions.

Incidentally I find out that the national spirit will be satisfied in the matter of being represented by an Army on the Western front, by two Corps or so fighting down here, provided they wave their flag hard enough.

Yours sincerely

(Sgd.) C. M. WAGSTAFF.

At the War Office the routing slip placed on this letter, indicating the different individuals to whom it should be circulated, bears the following statement:

"Comment. Annexed is a private and personal letter for our confidential information. The views put forth are Wagstaff's surmises, which may or may not be correct.

I suggest it would pay us better to be perfectly

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"Jury" is one of General Wagstaff's assistants; the copies of the interviews between C.I.G.S. (Chief of the Imperial General Staff), and General Pershing are those that General Wagstaff received from the American G.H.Q., and coincident with the report already given on pages 44 to 51; the Logan with whom he had a "long talk" was Colonel James Logan, at that time an Assistant Chief of Staff at our G.H.Q., in charge of the First Section of the General Staff there; the D.M.O. was the British Director of Operations in London, whose Deputy Chief was Colonel D. S. Kirke.

straight-forward than to juggle with the facts as Wagstaff suggests.

(Sgd.) D. S. KIRKE,  
Colonel. (M. O. I.)

## APPENDIX NO. 7

(The French Report sent by the Director of Military Operations of the British General Staff to the War Cabinet on January 25, 1918.)

NOTE FOR COLONEL FAGALDE

*Translation*

NOTE

by the French General Staff on  
American Military Assistance in 1918.

### I.—SITUATION OF THE AMERICAN ARMY IN FRANCE ON JANUARY 1ST.

On January 1st the combatant units,<sup>1</sup> of the American Expeditionary Force in France comprised:

- (a) 4 Divisions (incompletely trained)
- (b) 1 Coast Artillery Brigade, (personnel only)
- Total ..... 100,000 combatants.

The following is the situation of each of the 4 Divisions above referred to:

<sup>1</sup> Apart from combatant units the American Army in France comprises about 60,000 men of technical units (railway and air service) and of various noncombatant formations. Besides these, the 41st (Depot) Division may be considered as having completed disembarkation on January 20th.

*1st Division.* The units of this Division spent a few days in the front line during December. The Divisional instruction of the Division is now complete, and it took over a sector on January 15th.

*26th Division.* The Infantry and Artillery of this Division are completing their Infantry and Artillery training respectively; the four infantry regiments are to be put into the line during the early part of February, one regiment to each Division of the 11th French Army Corps. The 26th Division will then be reconcentrated for a short period for Divisional instruction, and will then take its place by the side of the 1st Division. It will probably take over a sector about April 1st.

*42nd Division.* The Infantry and Artillery of this Division are carrying out Infantry and Artillery training. When this training is completed (about the beginning of March) they will be put into line on the same principle as the 26th Division and subsequently carry out Divisional training in the same manner. It will probably take over a sector about May 1st (?).

*2nd Division.* The Infantry and Artillery of this Division are now being concentrated, and will shortly begin Infantry and Artillery training; it will pass through the same stages as the 26th and 42nd and will probably take over a sector about June 1st (?).

## II. PROBABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

The number of American Divisions which will be in a position to participate in offensive action by various

dates in the year 1918 can only be estimated on the basis of hypothesis as regards the rapidity with which the American Army will be trained and transported to France during the coming Spring and Summer.

The experience of the last 8 months, however, permits of these hypotheses being established on bases which are at least probable if not absolutely certain.

From what is known of the American effort, it can be anticipated:

1. That during the year 1918 the number of American troops transported will hardly average more than 2 Divisions a month.
2. That the American Divisions transported during the first 6 months of 1918 will arrive in France without having more than begun company etc., training.
3. That these Divisions will require at least 6 months for Infantry etc., training Divisional training and holding quiet sectors before they are fit to take part in a general offensive operation.

These hypotheses are rather favourable than not. As a matter of fact:

1. In the last 5 months 150,000 men have been transported to France from America, or an average of 30,000 men per month (1 strong American Division). The transportation of 2 Divisions a month, taking into consideration the tonnage required to supply these ever-increasing effectives, demands that the tonnage set aside for military transportation should be



immediately double, and in 10 months from now triple, the tonnage now employed for these purposes.

2. Training in the United States is at present hardly organized. The Infantry are still engaged on individual training, and the training of the Artillery has practically not begun.
3. The experience of British Divisions proves that 6 months Divisional training and holding quiet sectors is only just enough to break in the officers and staffs of large units to cope with the difficulties of modern warfare; a fortiori, the barely organized American Divisions which are expected in France during the first 3 months of 1918 will require 6 months war training.

The number of American Divisions in France:

On the 1st March will be .....	8
On the 1st June .....	14
On the 1st September .....	20
On the 1st January, 1919 .....	28

On the other hand, an American Army Corps consists of 6 Divisions, of which 4 are fighting Divisions, and 2 Depot Divisions. From these data the number of American fighting Divisions in France on the various dates above may be estimated.

It must be assumed that the only Divisions capable of taking part in an offensive will be the fighting Divisions which have completed their training, i.e., which have spent at least 6 months under training in France and in quiet sectors.

## III.—CONCLUSION.

The American offensive force at the disposal of the Entente during the Summer of 1918 will only comprise a few Divisions, (4 in July and 8 in October).

Apart from these completely trained Divisions it will, of course, be possible to utilize a certain number of Divisions (about 4 at any one time), which are only half-trained and have no instruction in warfare, to hold quiet sectors.

The French Commander-in-Chief bases his plan of operations on the decisive cooperation of the American Army in 1919. On the 1st May, 1919, the Entente will only have available 16 fully trained American Divisions capable of holding a quiet sector; so that by that date the American Army will only constitute a comparatively weak asset—and consequently will not be in a position to undertake and carry out offensive action on a large scale.

The American Army cannot be considered as constituting the new factor capable of obtaining a final decision in the year 1919, unless very great efforts are made in the near future:

- (1) To increase transportation from America to France, and
- (2) To secure that training in the United States and in France which shall produce the maximum effect.

## APPENDIX NO. 8

(The report of Lieutenant Colonel Murray to the War Cabinet.)

### INFORMATION ON THE AMERICAN ARMY

*Given by Lt. Col. Murray, Late M. A., Washington*

#### 1. *Effectives.*

Between the ages 21 and 31 there are estimated to be 10,000,000 men. The first draft was obtained by drawing lots for 3,000,000 out of the available 10,000,000. Of these 3,000,000; 700,000 were passed fit, and were drafted to training camps. It was then found, however, that a considerable proportion of these men were highly trained mechanics and otherwise required for vital industries. The Departments in charge of these industries had the power to visit camps and withdraw the men they wanted. Consequently the Army did not know from day to day how many men it could count on.

2. Additional to the above 700,000 there were 800,000 composed of Regular Army, National Guard and some 400,000 Volunteers, giving a total mobilized of 1,500,000.

3. As a result of the difficulties experienced with the first draft it was decided to re-classify the whole of the first 10,000,000 preparatory to calling up any further men. This has been completed, and classes can in future be called up with certainty, so that approximate numbers

required will be obtained. It is understood that the Government is on the point of calling up a certain number unknown.

4. *Infantry.*

The number of infantry in training is believed to be between 380,000 and 400,000. They are now mainly clothed.

5. *Training.*

Training has been a great difficulty. The original proposal to form centers for training Instructors—Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers—was not accepted by the Americans as they pointed out that it would delay commencement of training of drafts. It was decided to form large camps containing about 20,000 men each, and to attach to each camp 5 French and 5 British Instructors. Obviously this number is quite inadequate to train the numbers of men in question. Progress in the camps varies considerably mainly owing to climatic reasons. Men in the South where the winter is open are probably considerably ahead of those in the North. In Colonel Murray's opinion at least one month's training will be required on this side before battalions can be used as such.

6. *Discipline.*

The weak point of the American Army is its Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers, and consequently its discipline. He considers that our Instructors have, however, effected a great deal in the required direction, and that the necessity for strict discipline is now understood. The material is excellent.

(Signed) M.

Colonel, G. S.

## APPENDIX NO. 9

(Being an Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the British War Cabinet.)

### WAR CABINET, 372.

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WAR  
CABINET HELD AT 10, DOWNING STREET, S.W.,  
ON MONDAY, MARCH 25, 1918, AT 11 A.M.

*Assistance by the U. S. A., Forces in France.*

M. O. 1. M. O. 3     373/6

8. The Prime Minister drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the fact that it might be possible to use the United States troops in France, and stated that it had been suggested to him that the Americans might put four divisions in the line in the French sector.

General Maurice suggested that the four American divisions should not be called upon to take over more line at present than held by four French divisions in a quiet sector, and that these French divisions should then be sent to the battle front; further, that, as the American divisions gained experience, they should eventually enable two more French divisions to be withdrawn, for our assistance.

The Prime Minister added that he had been informed that of the two American displacement divisions one was

complete save as regards transport, and he would therefore recommend that we should supply the necessary transport for that division, and ask the United States Government to agree to its being placed in the line.

It was further suggested that the Americans should be asked to send to our front such field-guns and heavy guns (together with their crews) as we might require from those at present allocated for the use of the American Army.

It was also pointed out that there were 300,000 United States troops in France, and that of that number a considerable portion were high-class engineers, who were now building cold storage depots, etc., and that we should urge the American Government to send such men, as well as any Labour battalions that might have been formed, to the British front, with a view to perfecting the existing defences and creating others in their rear.

At this stage the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs interviewed Mr. Baker, the United States Secretary for War, and later informed the War Cabinet that they had urged Mr. Baker to take the necessary steps to give effect to the assistance suggested above, and, as he was going across to France, to see General Pershing on the subject, at the earliest moment.

It was mentioned that General Pershing had supreme powers as regards the allocation of the American troops in France, and the War Cabinet therefore directed:

The Secretary to inform Lord Milner as to the points in the discussion which had taken place, so that he might render such assistance as might be possible in persuading General Pershing to issue immediate orders on the subject.



They also requested:

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to send a personal telegram to Colonel House, notifying him of the proposals made to General Pershing, and pointing out the pressing need of such assistance.

## APPENDIX NO. 10

(Being an Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of  
The British War Cabinet.)

### WAR CABINET, 387.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
WAR CABINET HELD AT 10, DOWNING STREET,  
S.W., ON TUESDAY, APRIL 9TH, 1918,  
AT 11:30 A.M.

#### *Co-operation of the United States of America.*

3. With reference to War Cabinet 386, Minute 3, General Wigham informed the War Cabinet that he had just returned from France where he had seen General Pershing in connection with the transport of American troops to France and their employment in British and French divisions. This was the meeting at which General Hutchinson had been present. General Pershing had stated that he had seen it mentioned that 120,000 men per month, composed of infantry and machine-gun units, were to be transported during the next four months to Europe, with a view to their incorporation, but that he did not know the basis on which these figures had been arrived at. Although Mr. Baker, who was present at the meeting, confirmed the views General Wigham had expressed, General Pershing had reverted to his original

scheme of bringing the men across in divisions, and stated that he required guns and equipment for such divisions. Furthermore, General Pershing did not appear to visualize that any troops incorporated in British and French divisions would long remain there. He was further in favor of all replacement troops being at his disposal and not that of the Allies. As regards that agreement arrived at on the 27th March, by the Military Representatives of the Supreme War Council, to the effect that for the present only infantry and machine-gun units should be despatched from America, General Pershing had stated that he looked upon that agreement as only a temporary one, and subject to alteration. In reply to a question as to what number of troops the British might expect to receive General Pershing had agreed that we should receive the 60,000 during April which come through England, after which he would reconsider the question. General Wigham said that he had gathered that General Bliss was in favor of carrying out the agreement, and that Mr. Baker who had sailed for America the previous day, also agreed to the necessity for the maximum suitable American reinforcements being utilized in accordance with the Versailles Agreement. Summing up the attitude of General Pershing, General Wigham added that he had created in his mind the impression that General Pershing wanted to make a United States Army instead of helping us during the critical summer months. Difficulties had also arisen as regards the training of the American Higher Command, but General Wigham had made suggestions which seemed acceptable to General Pershing, and had added that if, in original British divisions, American troops ultimately predominated, American Commanders might be placed in command, and British

guns and gunners placed at their disposal. Mr. Baker had been very helpful throughout the Conference.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed the War Cabinet that he had seen General Hutchinson on this matter, and that he had despatched a telegram to Lord Reading setting out the situation as had been explained by General Wigham, and requesting Lord Reading to bring to the notice of the authorities at Washington the apparent difference of opinion between General Pershing on the one side, and what we conceive to be the President's policy, on the other.

## APPENDIX NO. 11

(The order issued by Field Marshall Sir Douglas Haig to his Armies, containing the general policies to be carried out in connection with the training of the six American Divisions that were to be attached to the British Expeditionary Force in Flanders.)

*Secret.*

*O.B./2196*

First Army.

Third Army.

Fourth Army.

Fifth Army.

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Arrangements have been concluded with the G.O.C. American Expeditionary Force by which one American Corps H.Q. and six American Divisions (less Artilleries) will be located for a period in the British Area for training with British Formations.

### *Control of American Troops.*

2. The American Corps H. Q. will be located at Château Bryas (about 2½ miles N.N.E. of St. Pol), and will be responsible for the general control and supervision of all the American Divisions, and will be authorized to visit and inspect these Divisions irrespective of the Army to which they are attached.

*Allotment.*

3. The American Divisions and units will be allotted to British Corps and will be attached or affiliated, as may be convenient, to British Formations or units in reserve, the Commanders and Staffs of American Formations being attached to equivalent British Formations.

A table showing the Corps to which American Divisions will be attached, and the areas in which they will be concentrated for preliminary training, is given in Appendix I.

The areas mentioned will be handed over complete with their Commandants, personnel and stores, to the Army to which the American Divisions are to be attached for training, and should be administered by the Corps to which the American Divisions are respectively affiliated, e. g., the Recques area will be handed over to the First Army, to be administered by the XV. Corps.

*Training and Command.*

4. As the American Divisions are destined eventually to rejoin and fight with the rest of the American Army in France, it is desirable that they should be trained in accordance with the American regulations and training instructions recently issued or to be issued. During the period of preliminary training, therefore, the responsibility for training American troops while out of the line will rest with the American Commanders and Staffs concerned.

5. On completion of the preliminary training, American units will be attached to kindred British units in the line for practical training in the trenches, the Commanders and Staffs of American Formations being attached to equivalent British Formations. During this period, or



whilst in the area of active operations, the tactical command of all American units will be vested in the British Commanders under whom they are serving.

To assist in the training, British Officers and N.C.O.'s will be attached to American units on the following scale:

1 per Infantry Battalion.

1 per Machine Gun Battalion.

1 per Signal Battalion. (It may be found necessary to attach one Signal Officer in addition, to supervise Signal Training generally.)

1 R.E. Officer per Battalion.

1 R.E. N.C.O per Company.

Detailed instructions in regard to the method and system of training, together with a syllabus, are given in Appendix II.

#### *Discipline.*

6. American troops will generally conform to the regulations in force for British troops.

Detailed instructions on the subject are given in Appendix III.

#### *Administration.*

7. The administration of the American troops in respect to the provision of supplies and stores of all kinds will be undertaken by the Corps to which the American Divisions are attached respectively.

The American Corps Headquarters will be administered by the Army in whose area it is located.

Detailed instructions on this subject are given in Appendix IV.

Armies will report to Q.M.G., G.H.Q., when the necessary storage accommodation referred to in Appendix IV, paras. 3 and 9, is available. It is important that the

accommodation required by the first two American Divisions should be made available forthwith, so that the rifles, etc., required can be stored in the concentration areas prior to the arrival of the American troops.

*Organization and Establishments.*

8. Tables are attached showing the organization of an American Division (less Artillery), and the total establishment of its component units, Appendix V.

*Medical Arrangements.*

9. Details of Medical arrangements are given in Appendix VI.

G. P. DAWNAY, M. G.  
for Lieutenant-General, C.G.S.

General Headquarters, 12th March, 1918.

(NOTE. The enclosures in the form of Six Appendices, have been omitted here, as they deal entirely with technical and administrative details relating to the respective subjects enumerated in the body of the order.—THE AUTHOR.)

## APPENDIX NO. 12

(Showing the original assignment of Billeting Areas made by the General Headquarters, B.E.F., for the reception of the first six American Divisions that were to be attached to the British Armies during May, 1918.)

### ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACCOMMODATING AMERICAN DIVISIONS.

#### *77th American Division.*

(39th British Cadre.)

The whole of the Division to be concentrated in the Recques Area, leaving the Eperlecques Area available for the Second Army. This will probably involve the provision of tents.

#### *82nd American Division.*

(66th British Cadre.)

Gamaches Area with a portion of Hallencourt, West, if required.

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*35th American Division.*

(30th British Cadre.)

St. Valery Area with a portion of Hallencourt, West, if required.

*28th American Division.*

Lumbres Area, less Lumbres Sub-Area to Second Army. It may be possible to obtain the Blequin Sub-Area in addition.

Divisional Headquarters, 2 Brigade Headquarters and 5 Battalion Training Staffs move to Lumbres on the 18th.

*4th American Division.*

Rue Area, provided the 74th (British) Division has moved out.

*"X" American Division.*

Samer Area.

(NOTE. The "X" U. S. Division, whose numerical designation was not known at this time, materialized later as the 30th Division.

The above allocation of Billeting Areas was a tentative one, based on the priority schedule of arrival of these Divisions, in so far as our General Headquarters was able to furnish it, at the time, to the G.H.Q., B.E.F. Actually the 77th Division went to the Eperlecques Area; the 82nd Division went to the St. Valery Area; the 35th Division to the Gamaches Area; the 28th Division to the Lumbres

Area and part of the Blenquin Sub-Area; the 4th Division to the Semar Area, and the 30th Division to the Recques Area.

In the later June arrivals, the 27th Division went into the Rue Area; the 33rd Division to the Hallencourt, West, Area; the 78th Division to the Area West and North-West of Lumbres; and the 80th Division to parts of the Thiembronne and Fruges Areas.—THE AUTHOR.)

## APPENDIX NO. 13

(Being the Extracts from the Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held May 14, 1918.)

EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WAR  
CABINET HELD AT 10, DOWNING STREET S. W.,  
ON TUESDAY, MAY 14TH, 1918.

### *United States Army.*

11. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to a telegram (No. 2139, dated 13th May, 1918) from Lord Reading, in which he stated that a very difficult situation had arisen in the United States owing to the publication in the American press, from a Canadian source, of what purported to be an expression of the views of the British Government relative to the formation of the American Army for use on the Western front.

Upon investigation, it appeared that the War Office, like other Departments, prepared a Weekly Summary as to the general situation, for the guidance of the Ministry of Information, and that from these summaries, the Minister of Information composed a communication which was widely distributed.

In the particular case in question a subordinate official of the Ministry of Information had misapprehended the War Office note, and his résumé of it had been grossly inaccurate and misleading, since he had applied to condi-



tions of today a sentence which, in the original document, referred to the totally different conditions of a year or more ago, when America entered the War.

The War Cabinet decided that :

(a) The Minister of Information should take the necessary action in relation to the official responsible for the blunder, and such further action as was necessary to prevent any recurrence of similar mistakes.

(b) The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a telegram to Lord Reading in the sense that the telegram to Ottawa did not emanate from the War Cabinet, and did not represent their views, and authorizing Lord Reading to repudiate it in the strongest terms. At the same time, Lord Reading should be informed confidentially that the mistake arose owing to a blunder of a subordinate in the Ministry of Information, who omitted a vital passage in a War Office appreciation which referred to the situation which existed twelve months ago.

(c) The Secretary of State for the Colonies should send an explanatory telegram to the Prime Minister of the Dominions, giving similar information to that sent to Lord Reading.

## APPENDIX NO. 14

(The report rendered to Lord Milner of the state of arrivals of American troops in the British Training Areas on May 14, 1918.)

14th May, 1918.

DEAR LORD MILNER :

Since my last letter of the 7th May, the 77th American Division has received all its equipment. Two regiments—the 307th and 308th—have finished their preliminary training and proceeded yesterday to join the Third Army for attachment to the 2nd and 42nd Imperial Divisions. These regiments are accompanied by a proportion of the Sanitary Train (one Ambulance Company and one Field Hospital per regiment), and some of the Military Police belonging to the 77th American Divisional Headquarters.

The remainder of the American Division are still doing preliminary training, which, in the case of the Engineer Regiment, is combined with work on the defences.

The 82nd and 35th Divisions are now commencing to arrive. Of the former, the 325th and 326th Regiments complete, and most of the 327th Regiment; while of the latter, the Divisional Headquarters, the 70th Infantry Brigade Headquarters and portions of the 137th, 139th, and 140th Regiments have disembarked.

The total rifle and machine gun strength of American

Divisions attached to the British Armies in France at the present time is, therefore, as follows :

	On Way to Training Area	In Training Area	
<i>77th Division.</i>			
Infantry (Rifles)	....	12,000	
Machine Guns	....	2,500	
<i>82nd Division.</i>			
Infantry (Rifles)	3,880	4,270	
Machine Guns	160	300	
<i>35th Division.</i>			
Infantry (Rifles)	3,570	1,620	
Machine Guns	....	280	
<i>Total</i>			<i>Total</i>
Infantry (Rifles)	7,450	17,890	25,340
Machine Guns	160	3,080	3,240

A telegram has been received from the British Mission at American Headquarters to the effect that the Engineer Regiment of the 35th Division has arrived at Brest and is under orders to proceed to the British Zone, while the Engineer Regiment of the 4th Division was due at Bordeaux on Sunday and will also be sent to the British Zone.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) GUY P. DAWNAY.

THE RIGHT HON. VISCOUNT MILNER,  
G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

Secretary of State for War,  
War Office, London.

## APPENDIX NO. 15

(Being the complete report from the British G.H.Q., in France to the Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff regarding the state of American troops in the British areas on May 29, 1918.)

O.B./2196.

*Secret.*

29th May, 1918.

DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE IMPERIAL GENERAL STAFF:

1. With reference to your telephone message of this afternoon, the following is the situation as regards the American troops in the British Areas:

	Infantry Rifles	Machine- Gunnery
77th American Division.....	12,000 (12 battalions)	2,500 (14 companies)
82nd American Division.....	10,811 (about 11 batts.)	2,280 (about 13 co's)
35th American Division.....	9,865 (about 10 batts.)	2,259 (about 12 co's)
28th American Division.....	11,597 (about 11½ batts.)	2,306 (about 13 co's)
4th American Division.....	6,177 (about 6 batts.)	1,173 (about 6 co's)
30th American Division.....	4,566 (4½ battalions)	1,008 (about 6 co's)
27th American Division.....	2,509 (2½ battalions)	157 (about 1 co.)
Totals .....	57,525 (equivalent of 57½ battalions)	11,683 (equivalent of 65 companies)

2. None of the above troops are fit for the line at present. With regard to detailed proposals for the use of American troops, please see this office O.B./2196 of 28th May, 1918, with annexes.

3. The situation in six weeks time is likely to be as follows: (vide O.B./2196 of 28th May, 1918.)

Twelve battalions of the 77th American Division should have completed training by battalions in the line—that is should have completed the period of attachment as additional battalions in British brigades—and should be ready to take their place in the line as American regiments and brigades, with the assistance of the British cadre divisions to which they were affiliated. The machine gun units of the 77th American Division should have done a short period of attachment as Corps Troops to a British Corps in the line. It is impossible to say at present whether these units will be fit to take their place alongside their infantry, but it seems probable that they may be.

The 12 battalions and 14 machine gun companies, each of the 82nd and 35th American Divisions respectively, will be undergoing their attachment to British Corps and Divisions in the line, the infantry battalions as additional battalions attached to British Brigades and the machine gun units attached as British Corps Troops.

The 12 battalions each of the 28th and 4th American Divisions will be in the earlier stages of their attachment as additional battalions to British brigades in the line. The machine gun units of these Divisions will be just about to begin their period of attachment as Corps Troops to British Corps in the line.

4. The foregoing is the probable situation in six weeks from now. In eight weeks from now the 82nd and 35th American Divisions will have reached the stage indicated

above, as that reached by the 77th American Division in six weeks. The 30th, 27th, 33rd, and 78th American Divisions should have reached the stage indicated above as that attained by the 28th and 4th American Divisions in six weeks.

5. To summarize, therefore, in six weeks from the present date there should be 12 battalions fit for the line and 48 battalions in various stages of individual unit training attached to our formations in the line. In eight weeks from the present date there should be 36 battalions fit for the line and 72 battalions in various stages of individual unit training attached to our formations in the line. The machine-gun units (14 companies to each division) will probably be a fortnight behind the infantry of the divisions.

The expression "fit for the line," however, must only be taken as referring to the infantry battalions and machine-gun companies. It will not be possible for a very considerable time to group these units into formations fit for the line unless British Commanders and Staffs from the cadre divisions or elsewhere are available. The American Commanders and Staffs are almost wholly untrained, and without military experience so far as the majority of the Staff Officers are concerned. This is a deficiency which it will take a very long time to make good.

6. So far as can be judged at present, it will be possible to deal in the way proposed in O.B./2196 of 28th May with a maximum of 200 battalions at any one time in the British area—or say the infantry and machine-gun units of 16 American Divisions—if 9 American Divisions can continue to be given their preliminary training in the back areas, and if one American battalion is attached for further training to each brigade of 28 to 31 British Divi-



sions. This, however, depends among other factors on the necessary transport being provided as the American troops come over. So far as we are aware, transport for no more than 8 American Divisions in all is available; but I understand that this matter is being taken up by Q.M.G. and D.S.D., who will also no doubt deal with the question of the provision of horses and of arms and equipment generally, including the maintenance of British transport and equipment handed over to American troops.

7. The most essential need is a greatly improved standard of military knowledge and training for the American Commanders and Staffs of all grades and in all formations. Without this the fitness of the American troops to take the field will be delayed for a period the length of which it is quite impossible to forecast. Otherwise, the weakest point is the lack of power of command shown by the non-commissioned officers.

It is for consideration whether or not it would be possible for certain commanders and senior staff officers to be sent ahead of their divisions to go through courses of attachment with British formations in this theatre. Perhaps the Cambridge Staff School might also be expanded to take in a number of junior American staff officers.

The organization of the American staff seems to be capable of improvement, in particular by the elimination of the brigade H.Q., which appear redundant and a probable cause of delay and duplication of work, intervening as they do between divisional and the regimental H.Q. We have no knowledge, however, of what experience of the existing organization has proved in the case of the American divisions in the line in the French zone.

8. In view of the fact that American troops may re-

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tain or adopt certain British transport and equipment, consideration of the question of a possible standardization of horsed and mechanical transport and of equipment of various kinds appears to be necessary.

(Sgd.) G. P. DAWNAY,  
Major-General, G. S.

## APPENDIX NO. 16

(Being the order "O.B./2196, 28th May, 1918," issued by the British G.H.Q., relative to the training and employment of the American Divisions in the British Zone.)

*Secret.*

First Army.

Second Army.

Third Army.

Fourth Army.

Fifth Army.

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I. With reference to G.H.Q. letter No. O.B./2196 of the 12th March, the following will be the general procedure in respect to the training of American Divisions in the British Zone.

- A. On arrival, American Divisions will be affiliated to British cadre Divisions in the back areas, and will undergo a course of preliminary training in accordance with American regulations and training instructions (copy attached), assisted where necessary by the staffs of the British cadre Divisions. The preliminary training will last for one month.
- B. On completion of this preliminary training the American troops, with their affiliated British cadre Divisions, when possible, will go forward for

training in the line. Each American Regiment (3 battalions) will be attached to a British Division for training in the line, one American Battalion being posted to each British Brigade; this period will last approximately for one month.

- C. On completion of period "B" the three American Battalions with each Division will be re-formed into regiments and, in so far as possible, the American regiments will be re-formed in their own Brigades, and will rejoin the British cadre Division to which they were originally affiliated. When this is not possible the American troops will be employed as complete regiments with the divisions to which they were attached during period "B."

2. While the infantry is going through period "B" the Machine-Gun Units will be posted to the British Corps in which the Infantry units are serving, and will be attached for training to British Machine-Gun units.

3. During the period "B" and, when necessary, during period "C," the staffs of American formations will be attached to kindred British formations.

4. During period "B" the command of all American units will be vested in the British Commanders under whom they are serving.

5. During period "C" the American troops which rejoin British cadre Divisions will be under the command of the British Divisional and Brigade Headquarters to begin with, the American Headquarters assisting. (Appendix "A" shows the manner in which the divisions will be organized). Subsequently, the command will pass to the American Divisional and Brigade Headquarters after a

period to be determined by the British Corps Commanders under whom the Divisions serve. The British Headquarters will remain available for assistance and advice for so long as may be found necessary. Command of regiments and battalions will be exercised by the American Commanders in all cases.

6. During period "C," the command of American troops employed as regiments in the British Divisions to which they were attached during period "B" will be exercised by the American regimental Commanders under the British Divisional Commanders.

(Sgd.) H. A. LAWRENCE,  
Lieutenant-General, C.G.S.

General Headquarters,  
28th May, 1918.

(NOTE. Appendix "A" has been omitted. It shows the detailed affiliation to be established between the units of the American Divisions and those of the British cadre Divisions.—THE AUTHOR.)

## APPENDIX NO. 17

(Being the Memorandum presented by General Foch  
to the Supreme War Council at a meeting held at Ver-  
sailles on June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1918.)

GENERAL IN CHIEF                      H.Q., June 1st, 1918.  
COMMANDING THE ALLIED ARMIES.      *Secret.*

### MEMORANDUM.

#### I.

The Allied Armies are engaged in a defensive battle with forces inferior to those of the enemy.

They can only obtain a successful issue by the intervention of their reserves which must therefore be kept as large as possible.

On March 21st the situation of both armies was the following :

	Allies	Enemy
American <sup>1</sup> .....	4	...
Belgian .....	12	...
British .....	57	...
French .....	99	...
Portuguese .....	2	...
	<hr/> 174	<hr/> 195

<sup>1</sup> Divisions with full strength.



That is an inferiority of 21 Divisions on the side of the Allies.

On May 30th, the situation was modified as follows:

	Allies	Enemy
American <sup>1</sup> .....	4	...
Belgian .....	12	...
British <sup>2</sup> .....	53	...
French <sup>3</sup> .....	103	...
Italian .....	2	...
	<hr/> 174	<hr/> 207

That is an inferiority of 33 Divisions on the Allied side.

This inferiority is made worse by the fact that the 12 Belgian Divisions, whose action is limited to their own front, and in spite of the extension of this front as far as Ypres, are only opposed by 7 German Divisions—which fact amounts to this: viz., 162 Allied Divisions are opposed to 200 German Divisions, thus giving the enemy the advantage of 38 Divisions.

On the other hand, the increasing development of the battle, the extension of the fronts of attack, compel the Allies to engage on these fronts and therefore to keep there, an ever increasing number of units, with the result that there is a corresponding decrease of units in reserve.

The grave danger which threatens the Allies today is to see this number of units being reduced to such an extent that it may be impossible to keep *sufficient reserves* to meet fresh attacks which are sure to take place, also to

<sup>1</sup> Divisions up to strength, to which the infantry of 3 divisions should be added.

<sup>2</sup> +4 (2 from Italy, 2 from the East) and —8, which have been broken up.

<sup>3</sup> +4 from Italy.

maintain the necessary strength to feed the battle and insure the relief of tired units.

It is therefore of *vital importance that, at all costs, the total number of French and British Divisions should be maintained*, and that the whole of the Allied forces should be *progressively and rapidly increased by the entry into the line of American forces*.<sup>1</sup>

## II.

The measures taken or to be taken in order to achieve these results are considered below:

### I. As regards the *French Army*:

France, in spite of her shortage in man-power, has done everything in her power to avoid any reduction in the number of her divisions.

The measures taken are summed up:

(a) Breaking up of battalions or regiments in excess of the normal number of battalions or regiments which standard units consist of, whether this number is attained by means of French units or Allied ones (Black, American, Polish, or the Tczeh-Slav regiments).

(b) Delay in making up to strength, units which have been engaged, so as to keep a sufficient margin, in order that the return to their units of the slightly wounded, evacuated in the Army Zone, shall not create any surplus of strength in some formations.

(c) Utilization of Creole and Colonial natives to replace French effectives of the same importance, not as drafts.

(The measures a, b, and c, are taken not successively, but simultaneously so as not to be reduced at a given moment to break up units, in order to make others up to

<sup>1</sup> The italics are the Author's.

strength, or to stop the creation of new artillery units in existence.)

(d) Increasing man-power by:

The intensive training of Class of 1919.

The combing out of men employed in factories on national work.

These measures, of which some may be called expedients, will enable France to keep all her divisions, provided that the total casualties of the French Army from May 1st to October 1st do not amount to more than 500,000.

But one realizes what the cost is!

2. As regards the *British Army*.

As early as the end of January, 1918, the attention of the Supreme War Council was drawn, in a pressing manner, to the insufficiency of man-power obtained by British recruiting in order to keep up the British Armies in France.

At the same session of the Supreme War Council, the Field Marshal, Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies, stated that if he had to meet an important offensive, he would have to consider the breaking up of 30 of his divisions, owing to shortage in effectives.

In fact, before March 21st, no measures had been taken to increase these effectives, with the result that in the month of April, Marshal Haig had to break up successively 9 Divisions.

On May 14th, the attention of the Marshal was called by General Foch to the necessity of reconstituting these units. The Field Marshal agreed and applied to the War Office for drafts to be sent especially for the purpose.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff gave hopes for the sending of the following drafts: 4 to 5000 men

belonging to class A, 15,000 men belonging to class B, and 50,000 men of classes not stated.

In fact, from May 1st to 31st, there only arrived in France 28,000 men of class A,<sup>1</sup> and 7,000 men of class B. Only one of the 9 Divisions, which were being broken up, was kept up. None of the other 8 were reconstituted. What is more, owing to heavy losses sustained by units of the 9th British Corps on the Aisne, the British General Staff contemplates breaking up 2 other divisions, which would mean the suppression of 10 divisions.

So that, at the moment of a decisive effort, on the part of the enemy, the strength of the British Army is decreasing day by day. It even decreases more rapidly than that of the American Army increases. (The entry of the American Army into the line can only be made progressively). The result is a decrease in the total strength of the Allies.

This consequence is exceptionally grave; it may mean the loss of the war. The most drastic and quickest measures must be taken in order to avert this danger which has been pointed out for some considerable time. That is to say: *British effectives* must be supplied without delay, either by the home country or by the armies operating in distant countries, in order to make up the total number of British Divisions.

### 3. As regards the *American Army*.

The programme of American arrivals in France for the month of June was decided at *Abbeville* on May 2nd.

It included, as that of May, the transportation by priority of 120,000 men (infantry strength of 6 divisions).

<sup>1</sup> That is the number provided normally.

When this programme is carried out, there will be 24 divisions landed in France (totally or infantry only).

The programme for July is not yet decided on.

Circumstances which demanded for May and June the arrival of infantry before anything else, still demand to-day, and more imperiously than ever, that during the month of July, infantry should be sent first and that the strength of this infantry should be increased from 120,000 to 200,000 men; that is the infantry of 10 new divisions.

A similar programme is contemplated for the month of August.

But, after having fulfilled the immediate requirements of the Coalition, one must consider further.

As soon as the programme for July is realized, 34 divisions will be in France, that is to say, almost the total number of divisions for the formation of which provision has been made by the American Government (42?).

The United States, who, when they joined the war, expressed their will to obtain the victory and who have already shown by the results obtained in May (184,000 men transported or on the way) their energy in the realization of this main idea, the United States cannot limit their efforts to this programme.

They must now consider a greater effort in order to pursue a war which will last a long time. For this object, they must contemplate a progressive increase of their army up to 100 divisions, and achieve this result by using their available shipping.

If they do so, then we can expect to turn the scales in our favor as regards the strength of the opposing armies and thus insure victory for the Allies.

Under these circumstances the Supreme War Council is asked to decide:

1. The total number of French Divisions will be maintained in accordance with the means provided for.

2. The total number of British Divisions will be made up again, without any delay, by means of resources from the home country and from armies fighting on fronts out of France; these divisions will be kept up to strength by means of resources obtained through the carrying into effect of the new law.

3. To ask the United States:

- (a) For the transportation over to France, during July, with priority of transport of the infantry of 10 more divisions (200,000 infantrymen or machine-gunners).

A similar programme must be considered for August.

- (b) To undertake, at once, the increasing of their Army up to 100 divisions, the transportation of which will be carried on without a stop so as to utilize all available tonnage; the training of these troops will be intensified in France as well as in the United States.

(Sgd.) F. Foch,

The General,  
Commander-in-Chief, the Allied Armies.



## APPENDIX NO. 18

(Being the Battle Order of the American Divisions and Corps on August 30, 1918, as prepared and furnished to the British War Office on that date by General Wagstaff, the Chief of the British Mission with the General Headquarters, A. E. F.)

### LOCATIONS A.E.F. 10 A.M. 30:8:18

FORMATIONS	HEADQUARTERS	HOW EMPLOYED
FIRST ARMY	Ligny-en-Barrois	No tactical control of Divisions in line
<i>I Corps</i>	Saizerais	Under First Army
2nd Division	Colombey-les-Belles	Re-constituting
5th Division	Chatel-sur-Moselle	Moving North
35th Division	Gerardmer	In line temp. under VII Corps to be relieved by 6th Div.
82nd Division	Marbach	Line N.E. of Toul
90th Division	Villers-en-Haye	Line N.E. of Toul
<i>IV Corps</i>	Toul	Under First Army
1st Division	Vaucouleurs	Re-constituting
42nd Division	Chatenois	Moving fr. Bourmont
78th Division	Bourmont	From British Area
89th Division	Lucey	Line N.W. of Toul
<i>V Corps</i>	Benoit Vaux	Under First Army
3rd Division	Gondrecourt	Re-constituting
4th Division	Vavincourt	Training
26th Division	N. E. of Bar-le-Duc	Moving North
33rd Division	Tronville-en-Barrois	Training
80th Division	Aigny-le-Duc	Moving to the vicinity of Chatillon-sur-Seine

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FORMATIONS	HEADQUARTERS	HOW EMPLOYED
<i>VI Corps</i>	Bourbonne-les-Bains	Attached First Army
79th Division	Prauthoy	Assigned First Army-training
91st Division	Montigny-le-Roi	Assigned First Army-training
<i>II Corps</i>	Houtherque	Tactical control of Divisions in line
27th Division	Near Watou	With Second British Army
30th Division	Near Watou	With Second British Army
<i>III Corps</i>	Fresnes	Tactical command of Vesle group
28th Division	Coulognes	In line Sixth French Army
77th Division	Fere anc Chateau	In line Sixth French Army
<i>VII Corps</i>	Remiremont	
6th Division	Remiremont	Moving to relieve 35th Division
29th Division	Montreux Vieux	Line (Gap of Bel-fort)
92nd Division	St. Die	In line with French 87th Division
<i>Unassigned</i>		
37th Division	Baccarat	In line
32nd Division	Tartiers	In line French Tenth Army
36th Division	Bar-sur-Aube	Training
81st Division	Tonnerre	Training
88th Division	Semur	Arriving
<i>Base Divisions</i>		
39th Division	St. Florent	Arriving
40th Division	La Geurche	Arriving
41st Division	St. Aignan	Depot Division
76th Division	St. Armant	Depot Division
83rd Division	Le Mans	Depot Division
85th Division	Sancerre.	Depot Division

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Prepared in the Operations Section of the General Staff G.H.Q.

This is a detailed historical map of the Forest of Puvennes, showing various villages, roads, and a railway line. The map is densely populated with place names and geographical features.

**Topography and Landmarks:**

- Forest of Puvennes:** A large, irregularly shaped area in the center of the map, labeled "FORET DE PUVENNES".
- Water Features:** Several rivers and streams are shown, including the "R. de la Lorry" at the top right, the "R. de la Mariculle" at the top left, and the "R. de la Lorry" at the bottom right. A large lake or pond is labeled "Lac de la Lorry" near the bottom right.
- Settlements and Villages:** Numerous villages are marked with dots and labeled, including:
  - Top left: "Sept. 19-25", "Sept. 16", "Sept. 13", "Sept. 12-13", "Sept. 14-15", "Sept. 17", "Sept. 18", "Sept. 19", "Sept. 20", "Sept. 21", "Sept. 22", "Sept. 23", "Sept. 24", "Sept. 25".
  - Top right: "Mariculle", "Lorry", "Sillegny", "Buxieres (sous Froidmont)", "Chermot", "Sept. 16", "Sept. 15", "Sept. 14", "Sept. 13", "Sept. 12", "Sept. 11", "Sept. 10", "Sept. 9", "Sept. 8", "Sept. 7", "Sept. 6", "Sept. 5", "Sept. 4", "Sept. 3", "Sept. 2", "Sept. 1".
  - Center: "Thiacourt", "Vieville", "en-Hay", "Vilcey", "Regnieville", "Tay-en-Hay", "Remenauville", "Limey", "Flirey", "Le Ronville", "Mamey", "Martincourt", "Gezoncourt", "Bernecourt", "Noviant", "Autreville", "Beaumont", "Loisy (sur Moselle)", "Pont-a-Murson", "Dieulouard", "Puvennes", "Foret de Puvennes".
  - Bottom left: "Sept. 19-25", "Sept. 16", "Sept. 13", "Sept. 12-13", "Sept. 14-15", "Sept. 17", "Sept. 18", "Sept. 19", "Sept. 20", "Sept. 21", "Sept. 22", "Sept. 23", "Sept. 24", "Sept. 25".
  - Bottom right: "Sept. 16", "Sept. 15", "Sept. 14", "Sept. 13", "Sept. 12", "Sept. 11", "Sept. 10", "Sept. 9", "Sept. 8", "Sept. 7", "Sept. 6", "Sept. 5", "Sept. 4", "Sept. 3", "Sept. 2", "Sept. 1".
- Roads and Railways:** A network of roads and a railway line (indicated by a line with cross-ticks) are shown, connecting various parts of the map.
- Other Features:** A "JUMP-OFF" point is marked near the bottom left. A "R. de la Lorry" is shown at the top right. A "R. de la Mariculle" is shown at the top left. A "R. de la Lorry" is shown at the bottom right.

